

The Crumb

Volume 72 • Issue Number 1 • **THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE** • Wednesday, August 13, 1997

The Password

It is simply a question
of syllables,
a word

the smallest
child may
know.

But when I say it
the sentry in you
smiles,

and all the doors fly open
on their winged
hinges.

-- Linda Pastan

All the doors fly open

1997 may mark the **seventy-second annual session** of the country's oldest writers' conference, but you've all been given the password and we're eager to meet you.

Welcome! Because you may not know the particular customs and traditions of this place, we've prepared this first issue of a modest little rag we call ***The Crumb***, filled with useful information and a certain attitude we hope may make *the sentry in you* smile. Each morning, you will find the day's edition of *The Crumb* waiting for you outside the Dining Hall or at the Front Desk, filled with the daily schedule, assorted announcements, wry asides, table scraps, and whatever else we feel like placing before you. If the cyber gods are willing, as they were last year, the day's *Crumb* will also appear on **Bread Loaf's web page** [<http://www.middlebury.edu/~blwd>] by evening, so your family and friends back home can keep up. Last year we even included some digital photos of conference events on the electronic *Crumb*.

Inside *this* special expanded edition, we list **things you'll find at Bread Loaf** [and things you won't], who's who in **staff and management**, some tips on **finding your way around**, our **official taboos and courtesies**, and other **pertinent details** to help ease your acclimation to life on Bread Loaf Mountain. You'll also find short excerpts from the work of the writers giving readings tonight: **Andrea Barrett** and **Sandy Solomon**. Your humble editor makes these selections each day without consulting the authors, so deliver all your remarks about our choices to the box outside the conference office marked "*Stuff for The Crumb*." We'll also take your news items, classifieds, cartoons, doodles, and *Crumb* mastheads [but, please, no poems, stories, or articles]. We make no promises about what we might use, but we *will* consider just about anything.

Things you'll find at Bread Loaf.....



A yellow barn
Lots of Adirondack chairs
Your own personal mailbox
Plenty of shady porches
Hot meals
Recycling
Four extremely popular pay phones
A coin laundry
Check cashing [only at the Front Desk]
A health clinic [in Cornwall Cottage]
A fax machine and a photocopier
A piano
A library and a bookstore
Tennis courts and hiking trails
Johnson's Pond
Free afternoon taxi service to Middlebury



.....and things you won't.



Taco Bell
Comfortable seats in the Little Theatre
A mailbox combination lock that's easy to open
Elevators
Reserved seating
TV reruns
Phones in your rooms
Dry cleaning
An ATM machine
A pharmacy
Easy access to the outside world
Elvis [though there are rumors]
A video store
A golf course
Lifeguards at Johnson's Pond
Winnebago hook-ups

Conference Staff:

Director: *Michael Collier*

Administrative Director: *Devon Jersild*

Admissions Coordinator and Administrative Assistant: *Carol Knauss*

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Steve Duffy
Kristen Henderson
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Karen Powell

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Michael Theune

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Jaime Grechika
Judy Watts

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Martha Clark
Michelle Demers

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Chin Chong

Audio/Visual

Technician:

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Editor of *The Crumb* and Director of the Bread Loaf Singers:

Al Hudgins

Computer Technician:

Caroline Eisner

Health Clinic Staff:

Pat Baker, R.N.
Theresa Luder, R.N.

Bread Loaf Management:

Front Desk Managers:

Edward and Victoria
Brown

Front Desk Assistants:

John Mancuso
Peter Newton

Kitchen Supervisor:

Tony Jackson
Paul Larocque

NECI Instructors:

Peg White and David Lamarre

Finding your way around

You've already discovered **the Inn** or you wouldn't be reading this. Some of you will be sleeping here. All of you will be eating here. The **Conference Office** is nearby, too, as are the **manuscript table**, the **Front Desk** [source of much useful information and incredibly patient people], the **Blue Parlor** [where you registered today], three **pay phones** to the rear of the lobby, and, sometimes, a bird's nest over the back door.



Behind the Inn, and at right angles to it, are two smaller buildings. The first is the **Little Theatre**, where all the **readings** are held. This building features state-of-the-art seating; the only trouble is: the art is *medieval torture*. You'll see, you'll see. Behind the stage in the theatre is a room where the **Bread Loaf Singers** will have their rehearsals, a change of location from previous years (please feel free to join us each day at 12:15, if you like to sing. Just follow the sound of music.)

The other building, further back from the Inn, is **Davison Library**, which all conference participants are welcome to use. This building also contains the **Apple Cellar computer room**, about which more later.



If you came by car and did as you were told, you've already found the large **Parking Lot** down the lane just east of the Inn. You must park here. It's the *only place* you're permitted to park. You cannot legally park on Vermont Route 125: your car may be ticketed by passing state troopers. You are also not supposed to park in front of the Inn after you've registered; this is reserved for our Bread Loaf Taxi. And parking behind the Inn is reserved for delivery vehicles. We'll remind you of this a few more times elsewhere in this issue to accommodate the stubborn, who seem to arrive each year along with everyone else.



The large yellow eastern side has places to sit when people re-



low building behind the Parking Lot is **The Barn**. The a huge interior space, with a **snack bar**, a piano, and comfortably. This is the part that is usually intended for simply to "The Barn." In other sections of the build-

The other essential place you need to find is **where you're staying**, if it's not one of those places listed above. The **Front Desk** can help. There are maps. Keep in mind that all the little buildings on this hill have quaint names, which are used in giving directions: learn yours. There's a, ahem, a *cottage* industry in divining ironic ambiguities from these names. Have a good time.

There are a few other places you might find it useful to locate: Next door to the Dining Hall is a building known as the **Annex** and in its basement down a few steps around the back is the **Conference Bookstore**. Across Vermont 125 from the Annex is **Cornwall Cottage**, where the **Health Clinic** is located, and two houses further east is **Treman**, the **faculty lounge** and site of the final Friday's cocktail party.



Weather permitting, we'll give **campus tours** today at **2, 3, and 4 p.m.** Meet in front of the Inn, under the **eagle sign**. We'll orient you and answer any questions you have. If it's raining, we'll meet in



Davison Library and give you a verbal tour.

The Courtesies of the Hill

Life on Bread Loaf Mountain has its distinctive rituals and routines, and we ask you to be aware of a few simple courtesies that, over the last seventy-some years, we have found make things work more comfortably for us all.

The daily *Crumb* usually has the answers to most of your Bread Loaf questions.

Of course you have to put up with all the limitations in our prose style, but we *will* keep up with and publish all last-minute changes.



Changes that don't make *The Crumb* are announced at meals.

If you don't make it for meals and refuse to read *The Crumb*, perhaps you can work out your own arrangements with the requisite muse.

Nearly everyone wants to attend conference events.

Please be understanding when you find things closed during scheduled events, or when an announced closing time is drawing near. Administrative staffers work in the library, the bookstore, and the conference office; they serve on the social staff, edit *The Crumb* and direct the Bread Loaf Singers. They're here on work scholarships to attend confer-



ence events and on those occasions when everyone wants to go to a particular event, you may find some of these services closed, with a friendly sign indicating when they will re-open.

Don't hog the phones. There are only four pay phones for all 200-plus of us. All outgoing calls must be made on these telephones. Please keep your

phone conversations brief when you see someone waiting. Consider keeping in touch with the outside world by writing letters.

Keep the Barn tidy. Imagine being in a frat house with 200 other people and having only one living room to hang out in. That's the Barn. Please use the trash and recycling containers provided and do what you can to keep things neat.





Shall we gather at the river?

Well, it wouldn't be practical, tho' it might be refreshing. But actually, all lectures

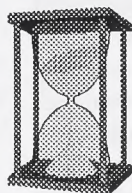
and readings, including readings by special guests, Bread Loaf fellows and scholars, administrative staffers, and the Wait Staff will be held in the **Little Theatre**. Open Mike Nights are held there, too. Meeting locations for other activities, such as workshops, panels, rehearsals, cocktail parties, etc. will be posted in *The Crumb* in the daily schedule. If you are unfamiliar with a designated location, the Front Desk is always able to help.

Theatre courtesies: Try to arrive on time. If you can't avoid being late, please don't enter the way Madonna would. Many latecomers find it easier to join those who choose to sit outside the screen doors, where they are free to smoke and swat mosquitoes.



The Bread Loaf Improv: We also encourage informal gatherings and will help you schedule them, if you drop by the Office with your plans. In the past, there have been informal poetry readings, group hikes, AA meetings, and

many other activities spontaneously organized by the Bread Loaf rank and file. The Conference Office will manage all requests for meeting space on a first-come, first-served basis. *The Crumb* will let you know the particulars.



Hours of Operation:

Generally speaking, here are the times when you will find things open around here:

Conference Office:

Daily: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
2:00 pm - 5:30 pm
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Front Desk & Switchboard:

M-Sat: 8:30 am - 10:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am - 12 noon
5:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Library:

M-Sat: 8:45 am - 12:30 pm
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
9:30 pm - 11:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am - 12 noon

Bookstore:

M-Sat: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Sunday: 11:00 am - 12 noon

Snack Bar:

Daily: 8:15 am - 6:00 pm
6:30 pm - 11:00 pm

Health Clinic:

Hours are posted on the Health Clinic door at Cornwall Cottage, across Route 125 from the Inn.

The Crumb:

Daily deadline: 2:00 pm

For whom the bell tolls: It tolls for thee—so thou mayest be awakened at 7:30 a.m. for thy breakfast, forewarned by ten minutes as to approaching events and reminded when thou hast become tardy. It also ringeth at the start of our daily luncheon and evening meal. Thou mayest note here, if thou wouldst like, that we have tolled you so.

Speaking of food:



We start serving breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and stop serving it at 8:30 a.m. Lunch begins at one o'clock, dinner, at 6:30 p.m. The day's scheduled entrees are written on a board outside the Dining Hall. Between meals, the Snack Bar, inside the Barn, can keep you from starving. They have great fries.

Pre - breakfast juice and coffee:

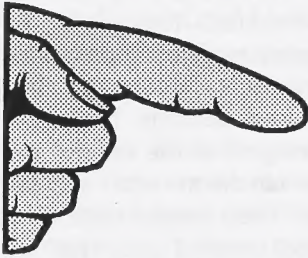
Available in the front corner of the Dining Hall by about 7 a.m.



Recycling: In Vermont, we recycle cans, bottles, colored paper, white

paper, newspapers, magazines, liberals, and even, on occasion, ideas. The recycling bins are clearly marked. Please use them.

Official Taboos at Bread Loaf



No smoking. Vermont law prohibits smoking in any building, including the dormitories. And outside, where you may indeed smoke, please exercise caution around these historic wooden buildings.

No food or drink in the Little Theatre or the Library. This prohibition extends to rotten eggs, fruit, and tomatoes, a circumstance for which you may be grateful as you approach the podium for your turn on Open Mike Night.

No parking on Vermont Route 125, in front of or behind the Inn. (We told you we'd keep mentioning this.)

Don't linger in the Dining Hall after meals. Before the contributors on our Wait Staff can go to the next event, they must clean up the Din-

ing Hall and set things up for the next meal. If *you* sit there, nursing along that third cup of coffee, you make things more difficult for them. They have come to Bread Loaf for the same reasons you have, and *not* for the glory of waiting tables. Keep the humble needs of our dedicated and hard-working Wait Staff in mind when you're tempted to tarry in the Dining Hall, and, instead, buy that last cup of coffee in the Barn.



Don't turn off hallway lights, even to conserve energy. It's a violation of fire laws.



Don't trash the communal bathrooms. Do what you can to help keep them clean.

Don't underestimate the curves and slope of our mountain roads in your haste to get to town. And be forewarned that Vermont speed limits are strictly enforced. It's a small state and

we're not about to ignore such potential sources of revenue. You have yourself a nice day, now.

Don't start a war between the Early Risers and the Night Owls. Whichever camp claims you, please be courteous about the needs of those strange people on the opposite side. Watch excessive noise late at night and excessive cheerfulness at breakfast. In general, the Barn is a good refuge for both camps. Early risers will find it



a better location for early morning workouts than their room or the corridors of their dormitories. Night owls will find the Barn ideal for late-night revelries, especially musical ones; keep in mind, though,



that the east side of the building houses sleeping quarters: keep it down after midnight if you don't want your party invaded by groggy, bleary-eyed Early Risers. Believe me, *that's* not a pretty sight.



More Details

Davison Library: You are welcome to make use of Davison Library, its printed and video resources, its typewriters, and its helpful staff (Ting Ting Cheng, Jaime Grechika, and Judy Watts). It's located next to the Little Theatre: just follow the sidewalk. The Middlebury College Library in town is also available to Bread Loafers.

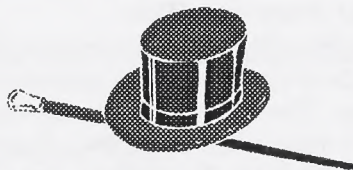


The Bookstore: Located in the basement of the building known as **The Annex**, next to the Inn's Dining Hall. The entrance is around the back. Here you may purchase books by faculty and fellows as well as miscellaneous supplies, such as soap, toothpaste, stationery, batteries, and Bread Loaf t-shirts. The friendly bookstore staff (Heather Best and Karen Powell) will accept cash, Visa, Master Card, and both personal and traveller's checks, but please don't ask them to be a check-cashing service. Do that at the Front Desk.



The Health Clinic: Registered nurses Pat Baker and Theresa Luden staff Cornwell Cottage, dispensing aspirins, ice packs, and other first aid treatments. They'll contact

a physician for you. They'll store and administer your medications if necessary. And if you need them and they're not in the Clinic, the Inn's Front Desk staff will know where they are.



The Blue Parlor: Available for use by all who attend the conference as a site for a more refined form of hanging out. Just keep in mind that people are often sleeping on the floor above, so try to rein in that witty banter as the hours wane.

The Bread Loaf Singers: Open to anyone who likes to sing. The group rehearses each day for forty-five minutes before lunch, at 12:15 p.m. in a room behind the stage in the Little Theatre and will perform for the conference several times next week. We welcome novices, even if you



don't know how to read music. It's a nice break from the world of words. And I have it on good authority that the director is a prince of a fellow.

Computers: Available in the Apple Cellar, at the rear of Davison Library. Caroline Eisner is the computer technician. Look for a separate sheet about this in your registration packet.



Faxes and Photocopies: The fax machine in the Conference Office is available when the office is staffed. This year, Jennifer Calder, Martha Clark, and Michelle Demers are Carol Knauss' lieutenants. Photocopies, in limited quantities, can be made during office hours for \$.10 a copy. No self-service. Allow plenty of time for the office staff to squeeze in your job amidst all the conference work.

Towels and washcloths: Provided by the conference and replaced once, midway through. **Bed linens** are also changed once.


Laundry: Near the phone booth by the Parking Lot is the Laundry House. Just look for the shack with a dirty sock on the floor. The Front Desk keeps a supply of quarters on hand, if you run out. You can purchase laundry detergent at the bookstore.

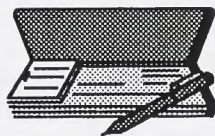


The myriad ways the Front Desk can help you



Managed by Ed and Victoria Brown and staffed by John Mancuso and Peter Newton, the Front Desk at the Inn is the place to go for **check cashing, mailbox problems, subscriber copies of the *New York Times*, the Bread Loaf **Lost and Found**, local lore, transportation info,** and other miscellaneous things. Generally speaking, if you're not sure whom to ask about something, head for the Front Desk and they can usually steer you right, and be downright charming as they do so. But here are a few more specifics:

- **Your mailboxes**, for which each of you received a combination, are located in the lobby and are notoriously difficult to open. The hash marks on the dial are part of the problem. They have irregular lengths that don't mean what you think. Practice a bit and you should get it. If you're stuck, ask the Front Desk for help. Remember, we each *share* a box: take care not to pick up your box-mate's mail. Check your box frequently: it's the most reliable way the conference staff has of communicating with you.
- **Post Office**: The Front Desk also doubles as a postal facility. Outgoing mail must be posted by 3 p.m. on weekdays and by 1 p.m. on Saturdays. There is no mail service on Sunday. Incoming mail is ready for distribution by about 9 a.m. and 4:45 p.m.
- **Newspapers**: Subscribers can pick up their *New York Times* each day at around 11 a.m.
- **Lost room keys** can be replaced at the Front Desk for a charge of \$25.00.
- **Incoming tele-**  **phone calls** go through the Front Desk switchboard [802/388-7945], which is open whenever the Front Desk is open. **Phone messages will be in your mailbox.** Tell your callers to keep time differences in mind. Remember, there are four pay phones [one near the Laundry House and three inside the Inn] for outgoing calls.
- **Locating you in an emergency**: If you plan to be off the Hill for any extended period of time, let the people at the Front Desk know.
- **Check cashing**: As we've said elsewhere, you may cash personal or traveller's checks at the Front Desk, up to \$75 per person per day.
- **Free Taxi to Middlebury**: Every afternoon at 2 o'clock, the Bread Loaf Taxi departs from the front of the Inn [near the eagle sign] for a free ride to the town of Middlebury. On your way down the mountain, the driver will designate the pick-up point and be waiting at 4 p.m. for the return trip. He will not inconvenience those who are punctual to accommodate stragglers, so please be prompt. The taxi will arrive back at the Inn around 4:30 p.m.
- **Gentle reminders not to park on Vermont 125**: The Front Desk is especially good at issuing these. You see, they have to deal with the problems caused by the illegal parking, and they have to hear the complaints from those transgressors who are ticketed. Make their lives simpler: park near the Barn.



Today's Schedule

- 10:00 Registration, *Blue Parlor*
- 1:00 Lunch, *Dining Hall*
- 2:00 More Registration, *Blue Parlor*
First Campus Tour, *Outside in front of the Inn*
- 3:00 Second Campus Tour, *Outside in front of the Inn*
- 4:00 Third Campus Tour, *Outside in front of the Inn*
- 6:30 Dinner, *Dining Hall*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **Andrea Barrett, Sandy Solomon**, *Little Theatre*
- 9:30 Coffee Reception, *Barn*

Tomorrow's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast, *Dining Hall*
- 9:00 Lecture: **David Bradley**, *Little Theatre*
- 10:00 Reading Period/Prep Time for Afternoon Workshops
- 11:30 Rehearsal, Bread Loaf Singers, *Little Theatre*
- 12:30 Lunch, *Dining Hall* [Thirty minutes early: this day only]
- 2:00 All Workshops, *Locations to be announced in Thursday's Crumb*
- 4:15 Guest Reading: **Russell Banks**, *Little Theatre*
- 5:30 Reception, *Library porch*
- 6:30 Dinner, *Dining Hall*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **C.D. Wright, Tom Piazza**, *Little Theatre*
- 9:30 Reading: **Scholars**, *Little Theatre*

The Many Ways We Meet

We gather together in many different ways, some well-planned, some spontaneous. To help you understand the nature of the various organized gatherings, we'd like to define our terms. What a **reading** is is obvious enough, but you may find it interesting to note the pattern in most of the pairings: faculty/fellow and different genres. There will also be **guest readings**, the first one occurring tomorrow with special guest **Russell Banks**. All readings are held in the Little Theatre. The **workshops** are small groups, led by the faculty member reading your manuscript and a fellow. Usually one of the scholars is also assigned to each workshop. The workshops are convened in various locations: read tomorrow's *Crumb* for more details on that. There will also be some **faculty lectures**, also held in the Little Theatre. **Craft classes**, taught by individual faculty members or fellows, are scheduled throughout the conference at various locations. These are usually classroom-size groups, and there will be sign-up sheets posted for the limited seating. **Guest presentations**, conducted by editors, agents, and other special guests, have similar space requirements and protocols. Finally, there are **panel discussions**, usually held in the Theatre, with no required cut-off point for numbers of participants.

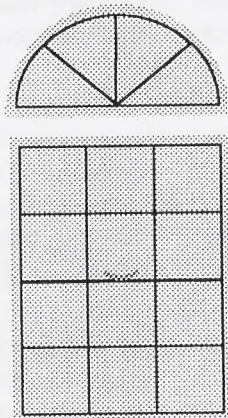
Tonight's Readings: Andrea Barrett and Sandy Solomon

The Evening Readings on this first night of the 1997 Bread Loaf Writers' Conference will be given by fiction faculty member Andrea Barrett and poetry fellow Sandy Solomon. All of our regular readings will feature such faculty/fellow combinations in differing genres. For further information about tonight's readers, please consult the biographical information enclosed in your registration packet.

Eclipse

Sandy Solomon

To that window he roused us, blurred with sleep,
our mouths slack with the side-on push of sheet
and mired in a dry, slightly bitter taste,
our eyes blinking into true: the full moon,
centered in that open screen and, in memory,
huge (as since I've seen it rounding from fields
or along a road like an outsized sign for food
or gas), and yet, as my father pointed, less
itself as the earth's shadow slowly slid,
like an eye doctor's black disk, between
the white, familiar O and us. A flush rose,
dulled garnet, there. Heads on hands, we waited,
toes alertly squirreling. The crickets stopped.
The warm, loamy breeze did not – it belled
the nightgowns at our skinny knees. First, sighs
as shadow hitched and held, then fidgeting unease
over the return: that it would not come, that it would.



They have always agreed that the worst moment, for each of them, was when they stepped from the boat to the dock on the final day of the course and saw their families waiting in the parking lot. Jonathan's wife had their four-year-old daughter balanced on her shoulders. Their two older children were leaning perilously over the guardrails and shrieking at the sight of him. Jessie had turned nine in Jonathan's absence, and Jonathan can't think of her eager face without remembering the starfish he brought as his sole, guilty gift.

Ruby's husband had parked their car just a few yards from Jonathan's family. Her sons were wearing baseball caps, and what Ruby remembers is the way the yellow linings lit their faces. For a minute she saw the children squealing near her sons as faceless, inconsequential; Jonathan later told her that her children had been similarly blurred for him. Then Jonathan said, "That's my family, there," and Ruby said, "That's mine, right next to yours," and all the faces leapt into focus for both of them.

Nothing that was to come – not the days in court, nor the days they moved, nor the losses of jobs and homes – would ever seem so awful to them as that moment when they first saw their families standing there, unaware and hopeful. Deceitfully, treacherously, Ruby and Jonathan separated and walked to the people waiting for them. They didn't introduce each other – although, they later admitted, they cast covert looks at each other's families. They thought they were invisible, that no one could see what had happened between them. They thought their families would not remember how they had stepped off the boat and stood, for an instant, together.


-- Andrea Barrett
From *"The Littoral Zone"*



Quote of the Day

Another Bread Loaf tradition is a little amusement we call *Quote of the Day*. The object here is to guess the identity of the quote's author, who must be a writer who's appeared at Bread Loaf at least once. Since so many writers have passed through here in the seven decades of the conference's history, some people find it

helpful to search the "set-up" paragraph for extra clues to the mystery author's identity. Take this paragraph, for instance. You could take time out — or "T.O." if you like things abbreviated — and search these lines for *anything* that might tip you off, particularly if you have the luck of the Irish about you. But the purists — these are people who pack nothing but books when they go off to, say, a secluded cabin on a lake in the woods — why, they can't be tempted with such shortcuts. "If you're going after the catch, ya oughta just look at the text, man": that's what the purists say. But regardless of which method you use, we hope you'll enjoy some very fine writing here in Quote of the Day.

If you *do* have a guess, however, write it down on a slip of paper, along with your name, and leave it in the box marked officially tabulated. As the quotes oblique, if necessary, quantity will over-

 multiple correct guesses will be shamelessly
 Not just for the glory of such august recognition?] Nope, there's a more ma-
 week, the person with the most correct guesses can walk into our Bread Loaf Bookstore and select *any volume of fiction, non-fiction, or poetry he or she chooses...as a free prize!* [In the past they've excluded the pricey coffeetable book on Bread Loaf that David Bain and Mary Duffy so skillfully and lovingly assembled, and they may decide to do so again, which I think is too bad, but that's out of my hands, folks, so here's that disclaimer.] Anyway, enough of my tiresome prose: let's switch gears and get to the good stuff [and *very* good stuff it is]:

They carried all the emotional baggage of men who might die. Grief, terror, love, longing — these were intangibles, but the intangibles had their own mass and specific gravity, they had tangible weight. They carried shameful memories. They carried the common secret of cowardice barely restrained, the instinct to run or freeze or hide, and in many respects this was the heaviest burden of all, for it could never be put down, it required perfect balance and perfect posture. They carried their reputations. They carried the soldier's greatest fear, which was the fear of blushing. Men killed, and died, because they were embarrassed not to. It was what had brought them to the war in the first place, nothing positive, no dreams of glory or honor, just to avoid the blush of dishonor. They died so as not to die of embarrassment. They crawled into tunnels and walked point and advanced under fire. Each morning, despite the unknowns, they made their legs move. They endured. They kept humping. They did not submit to the obvious alternative, which was simply to close the eyes and fall. So easy, really. Go limp and tumble to the ground and let the muscles unwind and not speak and not budge until your buddies picked you up and lifted you into the chopper that would roar and dip its nose and carry you off to the world. A mere matter of falling, yet no one ever fell. It was not courage, exactly; the object was not valor. Rather, they were too frightened to be cowards.

The Bread

Volume 72 • Issue Number 2

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Thursday, August 14, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

WORKSHOPS BEGIN TODAY; RUSSELL BANKS VISITS

This afternoon at 2 o'clock, all of the workshops will begin. We'll have workshops meeting in living rooms, workshops meeting in the dining hall, workshops meeting in parts of the Barn you hardly even knew existed, and if the fire marshal would let us, we'd've probably put a workshop up on one of the fire escapes. For the rest of the conference, the fiction workshops will alternate days with the poetry and non-fiction workshops. But today, it's everybody all at once, and that's why we have meetings scheduled in so many unusual places, as you'll see in the list below. You'll also need to come prepared, having read whatever your workshop leader requested you to, if he or she made such a request. Time has been set aside in this morning's schedule for reading: enjoy this luxury while you have it. Mornings will be a lot busier from here on out.



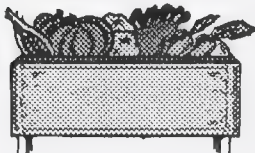
All: Brandy Brook Living Room
Alvarez: Blue Parlor
Barrett: Treman Living Room
Bell: Library - 2nd Floor
Boswell: Barn East Lounge
Bradley: Library - 2nd Floor
Collier: Frothingham Living Room

Hirsch: Barn 3
Keage: Library - 1st Floor
Mallon: Barn 2
Naylor: Barn 1
Nelson: Tamarack Living Room
Parini: Dining Hall
Sanders: Inn West Seminar

Scott: Fritz Living Room
Sleigh: Barn 4
Spires: Barn 5
Voigt: Barn 6
Wright: Barn West

Remember, the Front Desk has maps of the campus and can offer directions to find more exotic locations such as Tamarack, Frothingham, or Barn West.

Many interesting speakers will grace the Little Theatre podium today. At 9 a.m., novelist **David Bradley** will give a craft lecture entitled "The Mental Process of Revision." Special guest **Russell Banks** gives a reading this afternoon at 4:15, and the evening readings at 8:15 will be given by poetry faculty member **C.D. Wright** and fiction fellow **Tom Piazza**, followed by readings from this year's **Bread Loaf Scholars** at 9:30.



Please note these time changes: today's lunch will be at **12:30 p.m.** instead of the usual 1:00 p.m. This means that the **daily rehearsal of the Bread Loaf Singers** will also change times: **11:30 a.m.** today instead of the usual 12:15 p.m. Speaking of the Singers, all are welcome to join in, even if you didn't fill out the Singers form in your pre-registration packet.

Come to the Theatre this morning at 11:30 and find out more about it.

Sign-up sheets for Saturday's craft classes will be posted this morning at 9 on the bulletin board near the conference office. Sign-up sheets for tomorrow's classes have been posted there since yesterday. You may only select one from each day's group, and space is limited.

Today's Schedule:

- 7:30 Breakfast, *Dining Hall*
- 9:00 Lecture: **David Bradley**, *Theatre*
- 10:00 Reading Period/Prep Time
- 11:30 Rehearsal, Bread Loaf Singers, *Theatre*
- 12:30 Lunch, *Dining Hall*
- 2:00 All Workshops
- 4:15 Guest Reading: **Russell Banks**, *Theatre*
- 5:30 Reception, *Library porch*
- 6:30 Dinner, *Dining Hall*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **C.D.Wright, Tom Piazza**, *Theatre*
- 9:30 Reading: **Scholars**, *Theatre*



The Bread Loaf Taxi will not run today due to scheduling of all workshops at 2. The first taxi run will be Friday at 2. Please note, too, that the Taxi will make a thirty-minute stop at the Ames Shopping Center on Friday, Aug. 15, Tuesday, Aug. 19, and Friday, Aug. 22, arriving back at the Inn at 5 p.m. instead of 4:30.

The Bread Loaf Late Show

Tonight at 9:30 in the Little Theatre, the first of seven **late night readings** gets underway with readings by the **1997 Bread Loaf Scholars**: Elizabeth Arnold, Kevin Boyle, Stephen Burt, David Gilbert, Martha Greenwald, Becky Hagenston, Richard Hague, Sarah Jacobus, Honoree Jeffers, Greg Jones, Anna Keesey, Victoria Lancelotta, Caroline Langston, Corey Marks, Richard Meier, Dorothy Stephens, Dan Stolar, and Pimone Triplett. Tomorrow night: the first of three **Open Mike evening readings** [the other two are next Tuesday and a week from tonight]. There will also be two **Open Mike afternoon readings**: tomorrow at 5:30 and next Thursday at 5:30. **Open Mike sign-up sheets** will go up this morning on the bulletin board near the conference office: first sign, first read. Any contributor not already scheduled for another night's reading (such as administrative staff, wait staff, etc.) may sign up. Each Open Mike reader is given five minutes of podium time: please make sure your material fits and be courteous enough not to read past your allotted time. Most nights, the Bread Loaf Late Show will run about 90 minutes and, as past years have shown, will feature some of the conference's freshest and most original work.



A Reception this afternoon on the library porch

After that first workshop experience this afternoon, you may be more than ready for a little libation. Lucky for you we've got a reception scheduled for **5:30 p.m.** on the porch of Davidson Library. There will be two other such receptions next week, too: Tuesday afternoon at 5:30 and the gala reception on the lawn at Treman on the final Friday afternoon. I've heard a rumor that the Tuesday reception will also double as a book-signing opportunity.



The Bread Loaf Miscellany

An **introductory class** is being offered by **Caroline Eisner**, who runs the Apple Cellar computer room, on **BreadNet**, the telecommunications network of the Bread Loaf School of English and the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. This will be held at **10 a.m.** on **Friday, August 15**. Speaking of computers, **hours of operation for the Apple Cellar** will be from **8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** * **Please check the Appointments Schedule** on that same well-used bulletin board to confirm your requested time with an agent or editor. Some of these appointments are scheduled soon. * **Photos of the Workshops** will be taken today, tomorrow, and Saturday, some before the workshop begins, some after. Plan to arrive 5 minutes early just in case. 8x10 color prints are available for \$12 each. Orders must be placed by Monday, August 18 at 9 a.m. See Edward at the Front Desk for more details: he be the shutter man.*

Today's Voices

Russell Banks

Anyhow I figured a tattoo is like a flag for a single individual so I decided on the skull and bones flag like Captain Hook's only without the skull in it. Just the crossed bones. The skull kind of grossed me out and I was pretty sure after a few years of looking at it I'd get bored by it, so I was thinking X marks the spot and Malcolm X like in the movie and Treasure Buried Here and RR Crossing and suchlike. Plus when they saw it people'd still think I was evil even without the skull part which was cool. And whenever I looked at it myself I'd remember Peter Pan and my grandmother reading to me when I was a little kid. Russ thought it was an excellent decision too but he only picked up on the evil part. I didn't see any point in telling him about the rest.

From Rule of the Bone

C.D. Wright

Because conditions are ideal for crowing the singers flock to this spot. They rageth they seizeth they penetrateth and maketh us to lie down by the roaring waters. By day they take the longstem roses to our backdoor. They secure us to trellises. They whip us breathless. This includes the pool painter whose hands are perpetually blue. Aquatic. Transbluent. One hand signs the blued canvas of our body. Other hands. Cigaretted. Hired hands. Dripping paint on the plush carpet. They set a different set of teeth to each teat. Spit like grasshoppers. In the eden of their words, dogs glom. Warm winds stir them up. They let the flightless birds peck our feet. We hold mirrors. Bloody our lip under the rent in the backdoor. They crow us for the quick and the dead and on the third day they rise and crow us again. Very soon now we can return to our life of wonder and regret.

From Just Whistle

Tom Piazza

Last night I slept with a woman who had hair down to her ankles and a shotgun in her bathtub and all the mirrors in her room rattled when she laughed. She was good to me; I'll never say a bad word about her. There's always a history, though; her daughter was sleeping on a blanket in the dining room. It would have been perfect except for that.

From "Brownsville"

Quote of the Day

Our little daily puzzle got off to a good start yesterday when six Bread Loafers correctly identified novelist **Tim O'Brien** as the mystery author: Cathryn Alpert, Blue Argo, Hugh Coyle, Michelle Demers, Steve Duffy, and John Mancuso [if there were others after 2 p.m., I'll count them this time row.] Among the clues they noticed were Tim's initials ["You could Irish about you"], his ethnic heritage ["if you have the luck of the and two of his book titles, *In the Lake of the Woods* ["off to a lake in the woods"] and *Going After Cacciato* ["If you're going after the secluded cabin on a catch, ya oughta..."]. You see how this works now? All right, if everything's copacetic, we can think about *today's* mystery poet, winner of a major prize in this decade. Why, 'case you hadn't noticed, this will be our *initial* poetic Quote of the Day for 1997. So, sit y'self down and enjoy a poem you might even have heard around here not too long ago, a poem we may have in common—



Yellowjackets

When the plowblade struck
An old stump hiding under
The soil like a beggar's
Rotten tooth, they swarmed up
& Mister Jackson left the plow
Wedged like a whaler's harpoon.
The horse was midnight
Against dusk, tethered to somebody's
Pocketwatch. He shivered, but not
The way women shook their heads
Before mirrors at the five
& dime --- a deeper connection
To the low field's evening star.
He stood there, in tracechains,
Lathered in froth, just
Stopped by a great, goofy
Calmness. He whinnied
Once, & then the whole
Beautiful, blue-black sky
Fell on his back.



Just a reminder: guesses for Quote of the Day must be placed in the box next to the conference office by 2 p.m.

CARTOON BY NORTON GIRAULT



The Crumb

Volume 72 • Issue Number 3

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Friday, August 15, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast
- 9:00 Lecture: **Scott Russell Sanders**, "Voice in Personal Non-Fiction," *Theatre*
- 10:00 BreadNet Introductory Class, *Apple Celler*
- 10:10 Poetry and Non-Fiction Workshops
- 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Rehearsal Room behind the Theatre Stage*
- 1:00 Lunch
- 2:30 Classes on Craft, *Various Locations*
- 4:15 Afternoon Readings: **Agha Shahid Ali**, **Emily Hammond**
- 5:30 Open Mike Readings, *Theatre*
Guest presentation: **Susie Leness** on publicizing literary fiction and non-fiction, *Barn West*
- 6:30 Dinner
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **Tom Mallon**, **Mary Jo Bang**
- 9:30 Coffee Reception, *Barn*
- 10:15 The Bread Loaf Late Show: Open Mike Readings, *Theatre*

Today's Schedule for Those Not Yet Weary of Introductory Small Talk

- 7:30 "Do you eat this well back home?"
- 9:00 "I don't know about you, but I *like* it when non-fiction gets personal!"
- 10:00 "So, like, how long you been surfing the 'Net?"
- 10:10 "Before I understand what this poem means, you *must* tell me where you're from."
- 12:15 "There was a darling choir just like you at my niece's wedding reception."
- 1:00 "Is that an empty chair?"
- 2:30 "Which one of these classes is most likely to require breaking into small groups for discussion?"
- 4:15 "Do you think Mr. Ali would mind if I asked him if Kashmir is where cashmere sweaters come from? I have this cashmere sweater back home in the most adorable shade of tangerine."
- 5:30 "I don't have any fiction or poetry to read for my selection this afternoon, but I can read you a letter I've nearly finished writing to my girlfriend."
- 6:30 "Don't you just *pine* for cloth napkins about now?"
- 8:15 "*Historical* fiction? Oh, bummer! I heard he did *hysterical* fiction."
- 9:30 "Who can drink coffee at this hour?"
- 10:15 "It was *so* nice talking to you."



Our folding service is folding

Okay, you get the idea now, don't you? One fold down the middle of a legal-sized sheet of paper. Tomorrow morning, you get to do it yourself! A fold-it-yourself *Crumb*. And who says America is aerobically challenged?

Seven Classes on Craft Offered Today at 2:30

In your registration packet, you had course descriptions for the various classes on the craft of writing being offered this year. Sign-up sheets were posted Wednesday for today's seven classes: some may be full by now. More sheets were posted yesterday for tomorrow's two craft classes on poetry. Monday's single class doesn't require a sign-up sheet and the sheets for Tuesday's seven classes won't go up until Sunday. But shifting our focus back to the particular Friday we're actually in, we will now inform you as to who, what, and where. But keep in mind *you're not supposed to go if it's full and you didn't sign up.*

Poetry Classes:



JASON SOMMER

Syntax as Expressive Resource
Barn 2



RACHEL WETZSTEON

Poets and their Prose
Barn 1

Non-Fiction Class:



DAVID GESSNER

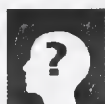
Journal-Keeping and the Sense of Place in Non-Fiction
Barn West

Fiction Classes:



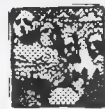
CATHRYN ALPERT

How to Write Convincing Sex Scenes Without Sounding Like a Pornographer, or Worse, a Romance Writer
Barn 4



MADISON SMARTT BELL

Narrative Design
Barn 3



PETER LANDESMAN

Fact and Fiction
Barn 5



BRADY UDALL

Where to Begin: How and Where to Enter Your Story
Barn 6

Guest Presentation at 5:30

Today at 5:30 in Barn West, **Susie Leness**, a publicity manager at HarperCollins Publishers, will discuss publicizing literary fiction and non-fiction and poetry. She'll discuss her experience with authors at her current position and at her former position at Vintage Books and explore ways that writers can interact with publicity departments to maximum advantage.

Coffee Reception Bumps the Bread Loaf Late Show to 10:15 p.m.



The Late Show's first **Open Mike Night** will begin at 10:15 in the Little Theatre, following a coffee reception to be held in the Barn at 9:30. Give that poor soul at the end of tonight's Open Mike list the benefit of all that caffeine to be had. Don't forget that there'll also be **Afternoon Open Mike Readings** today at **5:30 p.m.**

Sign-up sheets for Open Mike events are posted near the conference office, we patiently remind you, along with another gentle prompt that we really really *really* don't want to hear more than five minutes of your work even if it's really really really *REALLY* wonderful. C'mon, do the math.

Dial Nine for an Outside Line for local and long distance. If you only dial 1-8, you ring the phone at Tamarack, which can get really annoying for the people staying there.

Today's Voices

Agha Shahid Ali

Stationery

The moon did not become the sun.
It just fell on the desert
in great sheets, reams
of silver handmade by you.
The night is your cottage industry now,
the day your brisk emporium.
The world is full of paper.

Write to me.

From *The Half-Inch Himalayas*



Emily Hammond

Meet my family, the Greenes. My mother and father could be twins. She's the one with the bow in her hair, he's the one driving. Both are big and I mean fat, both are wearing shirts that say WE'RE FROM DISNEYLAND, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA. Mom got the shirts especially for this trip. She says they identify us as a family, but I refuse to wear mine. No way I'd wear a shirt like that; it even has a picture of the Matterhorn on the front. We almost had a fight about it with Mom saying what's the matter with me, didn't I have a sense of humor, and besides, we should be proud of where we're from, Disneyland being of international fame. Right up there, Mom, with Rome and Washington, D.C., Paris. Of course I'd never say such a thing. All I said was I preferred not to wear the shirt, thank you.

Chuck's crazy about his shirt. He's six years younger than me and doesn't know any better – I just turned eighteen. Chuck. Chubby Chuck. Have you ever seen pinker skin or more dimples? Right now he's blowing his nose. Allergies. There's wads of wet squishy Kleenex

all over the back seat and I think, get me out of this car. The air conditioner's going full blast, the windows are rolled up. It smells in here of Oreos and orange soda and fat people, I can't breathe. Get me away from these people, I'm not related to them.

From "Polaroid"

Tori Mallon

At 9 a.m. Harry Truman was two million votes ahead, with Illinois sitting on his side of the electoral college. Crossing the street to the Fellers', Anne looked back at 421 West Oliver and wondered if Annie Dewey wouldn't be less pained waiting out the end behind her own lace curtains than in New York City. There wasn't a single person on the sidewalk, and Anne doubted there would have been even if the owner were home. Any remaining chance the house had of ever being declared a national monument now depended on Ohio.

From *Dewey Defeats Truman*

Mary Jo Bang

Autopsy

How bare the soul – unmasked, deveined,
picked clean. How smooth the flesh
in death. Someone has arrived
to wash the dust away. Mulberry stains.
Indelible marks in hidden places.
Look at you. No longer resisting; unfolding
with ease; revealing scars
from wounds that were slow to heal.
The body remembers. You never won
but clearly battled. The sky here
is streaked with tile.
The scientific community
and the mildly curious have all come
to watch. You bloom in this forest of white.

From *Apology for Want*

Quote of the Day

Five readers correctly identified yesterday's mystery poet as Pulitzer Prize winner **Yusef Komunyakaa**, who was on the faculty here last summer: Blue Burt, Steve Duffy, James Fox, and Others guessed W.S. Merwin, C.D. Wright, and Linda Pastan.



Argo, Steve Jodee Stanley, James Wright, Some of the and his initials Day"]. The

dues: one of his book titles, *Copacetic* ["if everything's copacetic"] ["Why, 'case you hadn't noticed, this will be out initial poetic Quote of the poem was from *Magic City*, published in 1992. Today's quote was also published in 1992, a book of non-fiction by an author who has also written several volumes of poetry. If you're somewhat Cockney, this sentence will give you ample reasons for making a guess, but a midwestern accent might seem more familiar to you.

What is prayer?

I make a list:

Praise

Gratitude

Begging/pleading/cutting deals

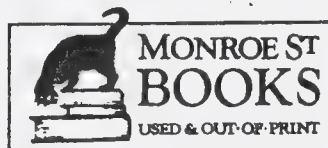
Fruitless whining and puling

Focus

There the list breaks off; I had found my word. Prayer only looks like an act of language; fundamentally it is a position, a placement of onself. Focus. Get there, and all that's left to say is the words.

AMNESTY FOR TIM O'BRIEN FANS

As I promised I would, I extended the deadline for the first Quote of the Day, so more could participate. Plus, I didn't check my mailbox for entries, which is where these were. Entries need to go in the box by the conference office marked "Quote of the Day" by 2 p.m. It makes my life simpler. Anyway, these eight Bread Loafers also correctly guessed the quote from *The Things They Carried*: Chauna Craig, Susan Gray, Richard Hague, Sonja Hansart-Weiner, Tanya Larkin, Anita Mathias, Sally Naylor, and Shauna Turnbull.



The Bread Loaf Miscellany

Looking for a few good men: The Bread Loaf Singers need tenors and basses. Rehearsal today at 12:15 behind the stage in the Theatre. * **Bad news for fans of Besmir Bingham:** The topic of C.D. Wright's lecture tomorrow has been changed from "An Autochthon's Letter to the World: Poetry of Besmir Bingham" to "Cooling Time, an American Poetry Vigil." There goes this great gag I'd written for tomorrow's *Crumb*. Maybe I'll stick it in my next novel. * **Workshop glamour makeovers not included:** Don't forget to come to your workshop five minutes early today in case Edward, our Wandering Lensman, arrives to take your picture. * **And not just to collect overdue book fines:** There are two others helping out in Davison Library that failed to be mentioned in the first issue of *The Crumb*. Chris Brady and Elin Waagen. * **He'll take care of you in more ways than one:** There'll be informal volleyball next to the Barn immediately after dinner most evenings. Leo, the Bread Loaf caretaker, says he's afraid of no one on the volleyball court. The games will last until dark or until everyone goes to the evening reading. All skill levels welcome, but watch out if you're guarding the net across from Leo. * **Board games for the bored:** Scrabble, Monopoly, and backgammon are available in the Blue Parlor, if anyone is interested. I mean the boxes are still in shrink wrap. There's a jigsaw puzzle, too. As you can see, the Conference spares no expense in obtaining the best in entertainment options for you. * **It doesn't stand for "Trade Mark":** Anyone interested in group practice of the TM-Sidhis program should contact Michelle in the conference office. * **A new meaning to the word "garage sale":** There's a terrific bookstore behind Dick and Flanzky Chodkowski's house in town called **Monroe Street Books**. You're unlikely to find a used bookstore where books are more lovingly cared for than here, and there's a good selection, too. I mention this because the store is quite a few blocks from the heart of Middlebury on a residential street just off Route Seven and thus easy to miss. The store, in fact, looks like a garage. Ask the Bread Loaf Taxi driver to point out Monroe Street as he rolls past it. Address: 7 Monroe Street. Phone: 802/388-1622. * **Get published fast:** No, that's not the title of another guest presentation, but *The Crumb* would like your drawings, cartoons, & mastheads.

THE CRUMB

Volume 72 • Issue Number 4

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Saturday, August 16, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Cartoon by Norton Girault

TODAY:
LOPEZ
STORY
HONGO
UDALL
MOVIE
DANCE



AND EVEN THINGS *NOT* SPELLED WITH FIVE LETTERS

And now the news for those who won't be functioning properly in the morning:

The Picnic at Frost Cabin: Sunday's lunch will be held at 1 p.m. at the **Robert Frost cabin**, about 1.5 miles away from the Inn, west on Vermont 125. Walkers will depart from the Inn at 12:30, and for those who require it, there will be van runs at noon and 12:20, departing from the porch at the Inn. Vans for the return trip will depart at 1:30 and at the end of the picnic, approximately 2:30 p.m. **No lunch will be served in the Dining Hall on Sunday**, though the Barn's snack bar will be open.

The John Elder Hikes: We are pleased to have **John Elder** as our guest for two special hikes early next week, for which sign-up sheets are available *at the front desk, not the bulletin board*. Both hikes are limited to twelve individuals. Monday's is a **nature hike** to Burnt Hill on the Long Trail, with fairly difficult terrain. Be on the Inn porch at 8:20 a.m. You'll return about 12:30 p.m. Tuesday's hike is a **Renga Hike**, named for the Japanese poetry form. Bring paper, pen, and good shoes. The hike is *not* strenuous, but you should be fairly fit. This hike leaves the porch at 9 and returns around 12 noon.

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast
 9:00 Lecture: **C.D. Wright**, "Excerpts from: Cooling Time, an American Poetry Vigil," *Theatre*
 9:00 Guest Presentation: **Sarah Heekin Redfield**, "Financial Resources for Writers"
 10:10 Fiction Workshops
 Guest Presentation: **Deirdre Heekin**, "Financial Resources for Writers"
 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Rehearsal Room behind the Theatre Stage*
 1:00 Lunch
 2:30 Classes on Craft, *Various Locations*
 Fiction Panel: **Carol Houck Smith, Geri Thoma, Lois Rosenthal, Andrea Barrett**, *Theatre*
 4:15 Guest Reading: **Barry Lopez**
 5:30 Guest Presentation: **Lois Rosenthal** on *Story Magazine*
 6:30 Dinner
 8:15 Evening Readings: **Garrett Hongo, Brady Udall**
 9:30 Dance, *Barn*
 Movie, *Theatre*
 Board Games, *Blue Parlor*

Today's Schedule [Tabloid Version]

- 7:30 **WOMAN EATS CHICKEN EMBRYO**
 9:00 **POET ABANDONS AUTOCHTHON AND GOES OFF ON PERSONAL VIGIL**
 10:00 **CLUES TO ELVIS' WHEREABOUTS FOUND IN FICTION MANUSCRIPT**
 12:15 **HARMONIC RESIDUE ACCUMULATES BEHIND STAGE**
 1:00 **MAN ATTEMPTS SUICIDE AFTER FACING YET ANOTHER SALAD BAR**
 2:30 **POETS CONVENE IN CLOSED MEETING**
 4:15 **HUNDREDS AGONIZE IN MEDIEVAL TORTURE CHAIRS WHILE MAN READS NEARBY**
 5:30 **EDITOR MAKES BLATANT ATTEMPT TO IMPRESS HIGHLY INTELLIGENT, SAWVY MAGAZINE PUBLISHER**
 6:30 **HEIMLICH MANEUVER FAILS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF HUMOR IN WAIT STAFF SKETCHES**
 8:15 **BLOODSUCKING INSECTS CLAIM MORE VICTIMS ON THEATRE PORCH**
 9:30 **COUPLE ARGUES VIOLENTLY ABOUT WHETHER TO GO DANCING OR SEE A MOVIE: WIND UP PLAYING MONOPOLY WITH 86-YEAR-OLD GRANDMOTHER**

Two Classes on Craft Offered Today at 2:30

TOM SLEIGH

Revision, or the Fascination of What's Difficult
 Barn 2

MARY JO BANG

The Extravagant Leap
 Barn 1



A word about manuscript protocol:

Some you with appointments with editors and agents have asked about this. It's a good idea to bring your manuscript with you to the appointment in case the two of you want to look at a few pages, and it's fine to ask if you can submit it by mail after the conference, but don't expect editors or agents to carry it with off with them.

The Bread Loaf Late Show



Tonight we're going to have ourselves one great time, with three choices of entertainment at 9:30: in the Barn, the ever-popular Saturday Night Dance, with guest DJ **Hugh Coyle**. Meanwhile, in the Theatre, there'll be a showing of the film *Sense and Sensibility*, with a follow-up panel discussion about the film Sunday morning at 10 in the Library Conference Room, featuring special guests **John Bertolini, Don Mitchell, and Ted Perry**. And for those seeking something more sedate tonight, there are board games and elegant conversation in the Blue Parlor. So, party on, dudes!

Today's Voices

Barry Lopez

We often come to wilderness to find animals; we are less sure about the presence of people. In the Wilderness Act, humans are construed as aliens, urged to make their visits relatively brief and to leave no mark of their passage. There are good reasons for this. Some people, oblivious to any but their own needs, leave a bright spoor; others have a resident's instincts and wish to build corrals and emergency shelters in country they visit regularly. But there is something unsettling in this kind of purity. To banish all evidence of ourselves means the wilderness is to that extent contrived. We are not, in fact, aliens; and Yukon-Charley offers a chance to reconsider this aspect of wilderness, and better determine what we mean by "human disturbance" in such places.

From Crossing Open Ground

Garrett Hongo

I am chronically dispirited. I take from everything low in my life – the daily stupidities of the newspaper, the jealousies of friends and rivals, remorse over items of clothing forgotten in Mainland hotel rooms and Honolulu diners, anger over an old hurtful remark from one of the relatives – and I make out of them a fine focus that can last all the day long. Or else I indulge in that patented low-grade unhappiness of bewilderment and ennui that is the nearly constant state of one who is alienated from things. It is as if I were spread abroad like

atmosphere itself, with no substance or engine of my own, but blown like the sulphuric clouds of gases from the volcano that drip acid from the sky, eating away at the car paint, congesting the lungs and inflaming the soft tissue around the eyes, triggering asthma in children and bouts of intense spiritual suffocation in those with advanced degrees.

From Volcano: A Memoir of Hawaii

Brady Udall

I am a cowboy. There are others in this outfit who prefer to call themselves ranch hands or just "hands," maybe they think *cowboy* is a little too flamboyant for this day and age, who knows, but shit, I herd cows, I vaccinate, brand, dehorn and castrate cows, more often than not I smell exactly like a cow – I am a cowboy. I've been at this for nine months now and I figure I've earned the right to call myself whatever in God's name I please.

From "He Becomes Deeply and Famously Drunk"

The Writer's Cramp Footrace

The Annual Writer's Cramp Footrace will commence at the starting line by the Inn at 10 a.m. It's a three-mile course up to Frost Cabin and back, and the winner in each category walks off (hobbles off?) with a free Bread Loaf T-shirt. There are prizes for second and third place, too, in three categories: female runners, male runners, and walkers. Do it for the glory, do it for the exercise, or just do it. Sign up (surprise, surprise) on the bulletin board outside the Blue Parlor today before 6 p.m. if you'd like to compete, but you can also sign-up Sunday morning. Meet at the porch at 9:45 a.m. Direct further questions to race director **Jen Calder** in the Conference Office.

Quote of the Day

Minnesota-native **Patricia Hampl** was yesterday's mystery author of non-fiction, and now you see why one of those clues gave "ample reasons for making a guess" if you're "somewhat Cockney." The quote was from *Search of the Contemplative Life*.



ers correctly guessed Trish, who Loaf the last two summers: Chauna Craig, Janett Highfill, Jean thias, and Jodee Stanley. For today's quote, we turn to some- tempted to call a morning person. I think the author would able designation. The excerpt below, from a short story entitled "A Real Doll," was read at Bread Loaf not too many years ago. I think it would be safe for me to mention that the object of the female pronoun is made of plastic.

I picked her up by her feet. It sounds unusual but I was too petrified to take her by the waist. I grabbed her by the ankles and carried her off like a Popsicle stick.

As soon as we were out back, sitting on the porch of what I used to call my fort, but which my sister and parents referred to as the playhouse, I started freaking. I was suddenly and incredibly aware that I was out with Barbie. I didn't know what to say.

"So, what kind of Barbie are you?" I asked.

"Excuse me?"

"Well, from listening to Jennifer I know there's Day to Night Barbie, Magic Moves Barbie, Gift-Giving Barbie, Tropical Barbie, My First Barbie, and more."

"I'm Tropical," she said. I'm Tropical, she said, the same way a person might say I'm Catholic or I'm Jewish. "I came with a one-piece bathing suit, a brush, and a ruffle you can wear so many ways," Barbie squeaked.

She actually squeaked. It turned out that squeaking was Barbie's birth defect. I pretended I didn't hear it.

We were quiet for a minute. A leaf larger than Barbie fell from the maple tree above us and I caught it just before it would have hit her. I half expected her to squeak, "You saved my life. I'm yours, forever." Instead she said, in a perfectly normal voice, "Wow, big leaf."

The Bread Loaf Miscellany: **How low can you go?** The Bread Loaf Singers *really* needs more basses. Today at 12:15. And if you signed up and never came, you're still most welcome. It's not too late. All is forgiven. Even you, David and Cathryn. * **How many will you read?** Today's the final day of the Illsley Public Library Book Sale in Middlebury. * **How many pages can I get you to take back with you?** Don't forget about your appointments with editors and agents. Times posted on the bulletin board. * **So we can all be fashionably late?** The Sunday Evening Readings will start 15 minutes earlier than usual, at 8 sharp. * **Should we introduce her to Leo?** "Volleyball player seeks same - several. Contact Kelly Howard/Box 2373." * **But it's still an enigma to me:** I have been asked to report that **Anna Keeseey** is *not* the author of *alt.Enigma*. * **A note from Sonja Hansard-Weiner:** "Thank you to the generous and anonymous writers who left contributions for my taxi fare from Burlington after my three flights from the midwest were delayed 3 hours."

THIS JUST IN: Janet Silver's meetings have been rescheduled from August 20 to August 17. Group meetings 3:30-4:30 at Inn West Seminary, individuals from 11:30 to 4:30 at the same location. That's tomorrow, please note!

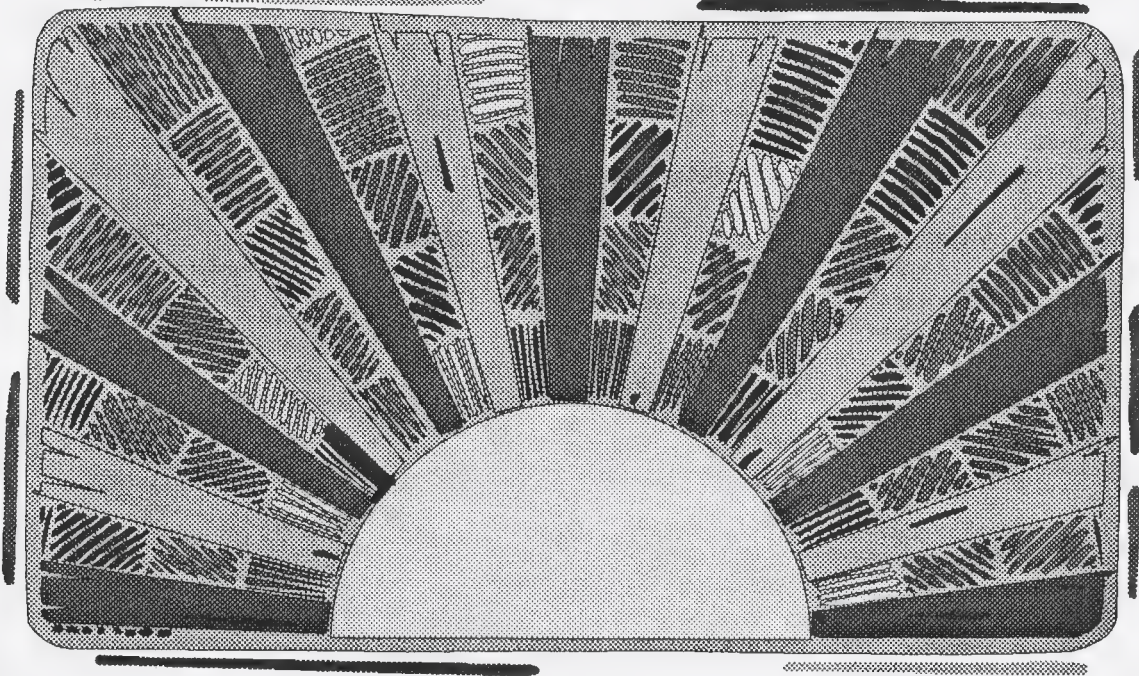
The Crumb

Volume 72 • Issue Number 5

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Sunday, August 17, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins



GOOD MORNING, CAMPERS!

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Hard Boiled Eggs, Bacon*
10:00 Writer's Cramp Footrace, *Inn*
Film Panel Discussion, *Library*
1:00 Picnic at Frost Cabin
6:30 Dinner: *Roast Leg of Lamb, Polenta Napoleon*
8:00 Evening Readings, *Theatre*

Today's Schedule for the Unbearably Cheerful

- 7:30 Isn't it just a great day to be alive?
10:00 I have just *so* much energy this morning,
I could run all the way to Middlebury!
1:00 Wasn't Mr. Frost just the sweetest man?
6:30 Oh, I just *love* this salad bar!
8:00 These chairs are *so* quaint and comfy!

The Bread Loaf Miscellany

Sooner Than You Think: Those of you with appointments with agent **Geri Thoma** on Monday now have appointments **today** at the Barn picnic area, or the Barn Lounge in case of rain. Those of you with appointments with editor **Janet Silver** on Wednesday also have these appointments moved to today in the Inn West Seminar. Check the board for the final word. * **Have You Done Your HOLMwork:** **Amy Holman** asks that people meeting with her come prepared with a few pages of their own work as well as the names of one or two contemporary writers whose work is something like their own. She adds that the usefulness of these individual meetings depends upon knowledge of the information she'll present at the hour-long presentations on Monday and Tuesday mornings, so be sure to attend one of these. * **Back to the Boards:** Sign-up sheets for Tuesday's craft classes and Open Mike events go up this morning. You know where. * **Not even for leftovers of the Garrett Hongo Memorial Tofu:** The Dining Hall will not be open for lunch today, because of the picnic at the Frost Cabin. * **It's a Date at Eight Department:** Don't forget that tonight's readings begin at 8. There are three readers scheduled, so the session will run a little longer than usual. * **An Anonymous Plea to Shelby:** "Shelby - Let's make a deal... You hand over the tongue and we don't ring the bell before 9... Many absent-minded poets lost and confused. Please...stop the insanity." * **Still Trying to Reunite Old Friends Department:** "Seeking **Anne Hannan**: Drop me a note. Signed, **Isabella Fiske McFarlin** a.k.a. *Ladybelle*" *

Dear Uncle Crumb:

Dear Uncle Crumb: What is the origin of the name "Bread Loaf?" -- Jane Doe

It comes from the shape of the mountain adjacent to the Inn. Some say it resembles a loaf of bread. Of course, others say it looks like two writers not married to each other under a Bread Loaf blanket.

Dear Uncle Crumb: Peter Landesman teased the Fact and Fiction class with the suspenseful ending to his novel The Raven. He wouldn't give it up. He expects us to read the book, but we have no time for discretionary reading. Can you uncover the ending for us? -- Can't Sleep

Well, now, how very interesting. It just so happens your kind Uncle Crumb has to make a "Today's Voices" selection from Mr. Landesman's work. Hmmm. This could be very interesting. Is it possible that your dear uncle could be bought off by the highest bidder? Stay tuned.

Dear Uncle Crumb: Is it possible to ask the smokers to smoke further away from the doors? The entranceways fill up with smoke because they smoke so close to them. -- Fogbound

Yes, it's possible.

The "Caption a Norton" Contest

Think up the best dialogue for this Norton Girault cartoon and win a copy of your winning entry hand-lettered and signed by the Official Cartoonist of Bread Loaf. Entries will be judged by a distinguished panel consisting of Mr. Girault, your humble editor, and Ms. Flamboyant Hats herself, Libby Stott. The judges' decision will be final.

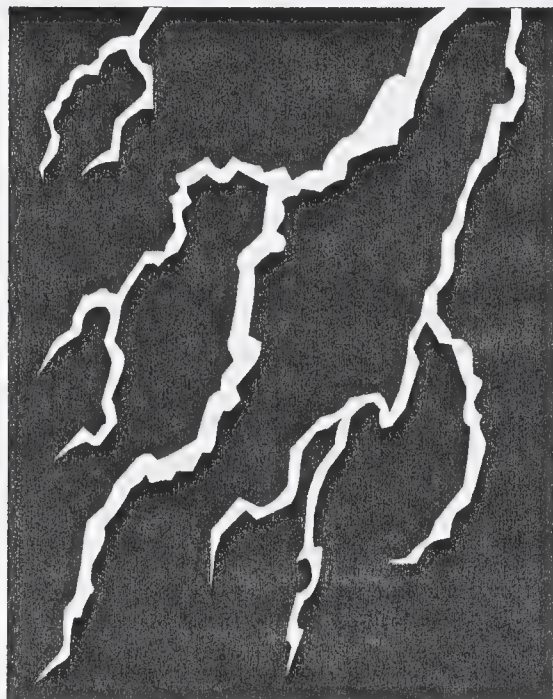


Today's Voices

Madison Smartt Bell

You could not call it an actual crucifixion, Doctor Hébert thought, because it was not actually a cross. Only a pole, or a log rather, with the bark still on it and scars on the bark toward the top, from the chain that had dragged it to this place, undoubtedly. A foot or eighteen inches below the mark of the chain, the woman's hands had been affixed to the wood by means of a large square-cut nail. The left hand was nailed over the right, palms forward. There had been some bleeding from the punctures and the runnels of blood along her inner forearms had hardened and cracked in the dry heat, from which the doctor concluded that she must have been there for several hours at the least. Surprising, then, that she was still alive.

From All Souls' Rising



Ellen Bryant Voigt

Fish

Fish in a bowl, cat on the rug, a vase
of wild iris brought inside.
When I start to change the water for the fish
and scrub the tank – when I dip my net and the fish,
as usual, sprint from wall to wall
like something crazed – today
when I lift one out of the water

I see my child, hands tied at her side,
writhing and tossing in her transparent cage.
The nurse was coming toward her with a hose
to cut off the air and such the mucus out.
And since what had to be cleaned
was in her throat and she could not speak,
her mouth closed and opened without a sound
on the M, the dark ah---

*like a fish, mute and thrashing,
like a beached fish.* But I didn't
think that then, watching: I think it now,
this fish in my net
and me thrown back ten years.

Tony Earley

In August the air over the lake is so thick you
can see it, and distances through the haze look
impossible to cross. The mountains disappear
before lunch, and even the skiers in their fast
boats get discouraged. The water is smooth and
gray, and the town of Lake Glen shimmers
across the channel like the place it tried to be.
At the beach, policemen sit in their station
wagons with the air conditioners running. The
college girls are tanned the color of good baseball
gloves.

From "The Prophet from Jupiter"

Quote of the Day

Yesterday, five Bread Loafers were able to sort out the clues sufficiently to surmise that **A.M. Homes** was our mystery author. Amy Homes was here as a Bread Loaf fellow in 1994, and now that you know her first name you'll cryptic message yesterday about an tion." There's also that bit about the "morning person": what else would



understand our "amiable designation author being a you expect from story collection, *without* bold type of the female pro-Steve Duffy, James

a writer with such initials? The story, incidentally, came from her first *The Safety of Objects*, which gave rise to this vague clue that appeared yesterday: "I think it would be **safe** for me to mention that the **object** noun." All right. Yesterday's winners were Blue Argo, Hugh Coyle, Fox, and Jodee Stanley. Others guessed Charles Baxter, Thom Jones, and Jane Smiley. In addition, there were two winners from the day before whose entries were *miiiiighty* close to my 2 p.m. deadline and didn't get retrieved in time for yesterday's edition, but we'll let it slide: Steve Duffy and James Fox. So, what this all means is that Steve Duffy leads the competition with 4 points, followed closely by three Bread Loafers with 3 points: Blue Argo, James Fox, and Jodee Stanley. Well, let's not stand on ceremony now. The beauty of this list is that it changes; at least that would be my advice to any of you literary prophets, though I don't claim to be a mind-reader. Have you had enough of these obscure clues? Should it be mentioned that today's author taught on the Bread Loaf faculty *before your humble editor was even born*? But don't presume that this person has passed away [how old do you think your editor *is* anyway?]. Our mystery author is alive and well and living in Cummington, Massachusetts...and so widely known that even talking horses evoke this poet's name. Here's one of my favorite poems from our author's substantial body of work:

Under a Tree

We know those tales of gods in hot pursuit
Who frightened wood-nymphs into taking root

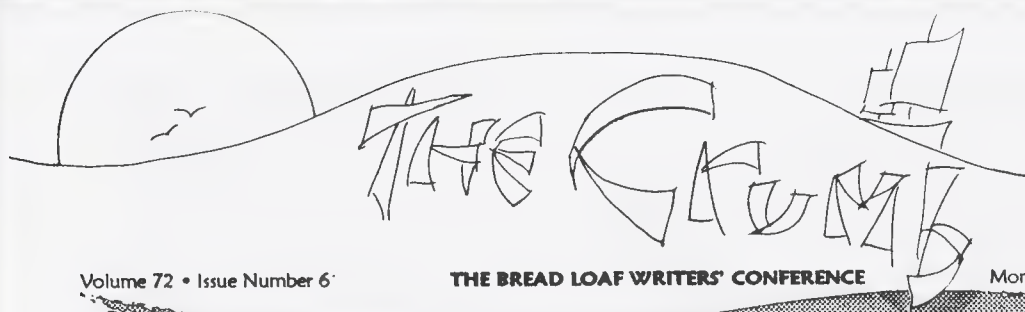
And changing them into a branchy shape
Fair, but perplexing to the thought of rape:

But this, we say, is more how love is made—
Ply and reply of limbs in fireshot shade,

Where overhead we hear tossed leaves consent
To take the wind in free dishevelment

And, answering with supple blade and stem,
Caress the gusts that are caressing them.





Volume 72 • Issue Number 6

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Monday, August 18, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Masthead by Peter Newton

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *French Toast, Vermont Mayo*
 8:20 Nature Hike with **John Elder**
 9:00 Lecture: **Agha Shahid Ali**, "The Ghazal in America: May I?"
 10:10 Poetry and Non-Fiction Workshops, *Various Locations*
 10:15 Guest Presentation: **Amy Holman**, *Theatre*
 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Theatre*
 1:00 Lunch: *BBQ Beef Sandwich, Black Bean and Corn Tortilla*
 2:00 Fiction Workshops, *Various Locations*
 2:30 Guest Presentation: **James Longenbach**, "Sex and the Plain Style in American Poetry," *Theatre*
 4:15 Afternoon Readings: **Tom Sleigh**, **Mike Magnuson**, *Theatre*
 6:30 Dinner: *Baked Cod, Vegetable Tart*
 8:15 Evening Readings: **Scott Russell Sanders**, **Carolyn Ferrell**, *Theatre*
 9:30 Coffee Reception, *Barn*
 10:15 The Bread Loaf Late Show: **Wait Staff, Part One**, *Theatre*
 Featuring: Ian Pounds, Spencer Short, Adam Novy, Brock Clarke, Anita Mathias, Stephanie Renfrow, Jean Kwok, Chauna Craig, Glori Simmons, Peter Henry, Joelle Biele, Michael Tyrell, and Tanya Larkin.



Today's Schedule for Whiners

- 7:30 Why can't I have *pannnnnncakes*?
 8:20 But I didn't know you *haaaaaad* to sign up for the hike.
 9:00 I don't know what a ghazal *iiiiiiiis*.
 10:10 But why *cannnnnnn't* I get a six-figure book deal for my non-fiction book on mushrooms?
 10:15 I couldn't get an *appoinnnnnnnntment* with Amy Holman, so why should I go hear her *leccccccture*?
 1:00 But I don't *liiiiiiiiike* food that begins with 'B.'
 2:00 Just because the main character in my story is exactly like me doesn't mean I'd be taking criticism of that character *perrrrrrsonally*. I want you to tell me what you *reeeeally* think.
 4:15 I really need a *naaaaaaaaap*.
 6:30 Cads and tarts? Sounds like my experience at the *dannnnnnnnce*.
 8:15 Why can't they get softer *chaaaair*?
 9:30 I don't want coffee. I want *boooooze*.
 10:15 How come everyone is *loooooooking* at me that way?



Hello, I must be going

Maybe you don't want to face this yet, but we're at the halfway point now, and we need to begin discussing arrangements for your departure. **If you are in need of transportation on Sunday, August 24 to a bus depot or airport,** you should sign up for a **shared taxi** at the **Front Desk**, not the Conference

Office. Please have your travel times available. You are free to make your own arrangements if you choose, but the shared taxi will be cheaper. The preliminary **shared taxi departure schedule** will be posted near the Front Desk by **Thursday, August 21**. If you have requested a shared taxi, you should **check the schedule no later than Thursday evening** and **confirm your reservation**. Your **non-refundable fare** will be payable when you do so. Please note those words: *non-refundable*. Once you have confirmed your reservation for a shared taxi, **please don't subsequently arrange alternate transportation**. We spend a good bit of time determining the size and number of vehicles we'll need based on your reservations, and **taxis are scheduled based on the number of people expected to need service at a particular hour**. Changes and cancellations put a major crimp in our carefully-worked plans. Don't overlook the fact, too, that **your fare must be paid when you confirm your reservation** and that, once paid, **it will not be refunded**. **We cannot make changes in the taxi schedules after 6 p.m. Friday, August 22**. The taxis will depart from the front of the Inn at the times indicated on the schedule. In this regard, we will maintain the punctuality of *Die Bahn*, the German National Railroad. If, for example, we post a departure time of 9:00 sharp, that's exactly what we mean: 9:00, not 9:05 or 9:10. We will leave on time. You must be in front of the Inn at the

stated time with your luggage at hand, ready to board. There won't be time to talk about Victor Laszlo or how we'll always have Paris. There won't be time for one last picture. **We cannot come looking for you and we won't hold the taxi** if you're late. Should you miss your scheduled taxi, you will be responsible for making your own alternate arrangements, at your own expense.



Results of the Writer's Cramp Race

Female runners:

- 1st Place: **Erin Teare (24:40)**
2nd Place: **Kathy Stevenson (26:26)**
3rd Place: **Jahmae Harris (27:03)**

Male runners:

- 1st Place: **Ed Brown (20:05)**
2nd Place: **Jon Stamell (22:09)**
3rd Place: **Peter Houlahan (22:20)**

Walkers:

- 1st Place: **Kathleen Devereaux**
2nd Place: **Nadja Venezian**

Our thanks to race director **Jen Calder** for making this annual event happen in '97.

The Bread Loaf Miscellany

Ideas into Concepts Department: Anyone interested in discussing the writing of commercial screenplays should leave a note in **Box 2369**. * **Caption the Norton Department:** We have received quite a few entries into caption headquarters here, but there's still time for you to offer yours. Deadline: Noon tomorrow. * **2020 Department:** A pair of eyeglasses and a contact lens kit was lost at the dance. If you find these, bring them to the Front Desk. * **Counterfeit Crumbs Department:** The elusive *Shelby* continues to wreak havoc or whatever else it is one wreaks, and it would appear that not even revered institutions like your little *Crumb* are immune from her rampages. But despite the appearance of a bogus issue of this morning's edition, we here at the real *Crumb* insist that we would never have called *Shelby* "hostile and barbaric." In fact, we can never get her to return our phone calls. We do, however, acknowledge her formidable powers for consumption of the good stuff. *



Today's Voices

Tom Sleigh

The Root Cellar

A slithering rustle through ivy and leaves
Like the voice of a dead one returning:
Again that gone sweetness pours in my ear
And leads me back down the lightless stairs
To the cobwebbed dank of the root cellar,
Underworld of onions, beets, potatoes
Shrouded in burlap's rough puckers and folds.
Your voice exhumed from swallowing sod
Gathers breath, freshens: My tongue cleaves to yours
As we snake in and out of the old tune's
Stinging whiplash of notes, your alto twang
Upstaging my tenor as you brandish
An onion like an apple: My mouth waters
For the sweet white flesh stinging my eyes to tears.

Mike Magnuson

This is why a man's minutes are years. I know the body under the sheet. She is Ann Margaret Hathaway, and she is dead. I know the stairway to the apartment behind her, the creak in the steps, the angle it takes to stuff a couch in the upstairs door. Each chair inside, each towel, each fork, knife, and ladle -- even the road they traveled to get here -- I know. I know the way she smiles, her lip curled, head cocked, her nose split into a bulb at the turned-up tip. I know the bar where she peddled dope after college classes. I know her son, of the night he was born, how she named him after Frederick the Great. I know the nature of her divorce, ink and paper and a story about an ashtray smacking her and a six-pack of Leinenkugel's Bock dumped on her head. I know the way, on good nights months ago, she would buck her pelvis underneath mine. These are years, still pictures coming to me rapid-fire -- the Liquid Forest Bar, the pine trees in McCutcheon, a handshake we made like realtors, a brawl we had on our apartment-building stairs -- and I see these years with the minutes passing. *From The Right Man for the Job*

Scott Russell Sanders

Since you ask for an account of my writing, I will give you one. But I do so warily, because when writers speak about their work, they often puff up like blowfish. Writing is work, and it can leave you gray with exhaustion, can devour your days, can break your heart. But the same is true of all the real work that humans do, the planting of crops and nursing of babies, the building of houses and baking of bread. Writing is neither holy nor mysterious, except insofar as everything we do with our gathered powers is holy and mysterious. Without trumpets, therefore, let me tell you how I began and how I have pursued this art. Along the way I must also tell you something of my life, for writing is to living as grass is to soil.

From Writing from the Center

Carolyn Farrell

Mother never wore make-up or very pretty dresses. The permanent had just about grown out and was just hanging on at the extra-blond ends of her hair. Her normal dresses were called "shifts" in Mays Department Store. They were full of juice stains, or blood, or rips. She would always ask, "But who do I have to dress up for?" and then look at me like I was supposed to have the answer. That made me just put my eyes to the floor and pretend like I was thinking of something else. *Who?* How the hell did I know? Mother's eyes would be staring straight at me, so blue you'd think she lay in bed at night and they glowed in the dark with that question. She did have one pretty dress, fading roses on a green background, but you really couldn't hold that against her. Because she hardly wore it then, only sometimes at night, when she was feeling that old special feeling, as if somebody else besides me loved her. She was remembering my father. It was every now and then. We put candlesticks on the table and Mother made an old favorite of ours when we were an actual family: Yankee pot roast. We would eat it like we were starved. *From "Miracle Answer"*

Quote of the Day

If your humble editor may be forgiven a reference to Mister Ed the Talking Horse, whose cry of "Wil-BURRRR" correctly identifies yesterday's mystery author as the poet **Richard Wilbur**, the other clues came from *Beautiful Changes*, and *The Mind-Loaf* in 1950 and



some of his book titles: *The Ceremony*, *Advice to a Prophet*, *Reader*. He first taught at Bread has been back here frequently Chauna Craig, Steve Duffy, James Maxine Kumin was the only other our little competition. Because have been too easy, we offer

since. Six Bread Loafers (Blue Argo, Steve Burt, Fox, and Anita Mathias) guessed his identity. poet guessed. That means Steve remains the leader in some of you have complained that these quotes today's quote without any clues at all. It's a distinctive prose style, however, from a writer who was long associated with Bread Loaf. Those of you faint of heart should be forewarned that this morning's quote is rather sexually explicit, but probably not any more so than what may have already transpired around here in the last 48 hours.

Then, at what instinctively she felt was exactly the propitious biological moment, she reached out and seized him, she reached out and brought him to her. She raised him on top of her and guided him into her body. She wrapped her legs about his buttocks and alternately squeezed, released, and squeezed, pressing his body deeper inside her own with each contraction, rocking him, inching him along her clitoris, easing him through the zones of her flesh and up the boneless scaffold of her sex, thinking, who'd not lain with men in years, who'd held them off with their activating poisons, the white agency of her soiled, provoked chemistry, all the radical synergistics of their deadly, complice, conspired force, who'd used mechanics, gadgets, gravity, vibrators, even her moistened fingers like so many machines, who'd explored her own almost articulated nerve endings till she knew them like the strings that raised and lowered the joints of puppets, thinking *Now! Now! Now!* Thinking of monstrosities, freaks, ogres, and demons, conjuring werewolves, vampires, harpies, and hellhounds, conjecturing man-eaters, eyesores, humpbacks, and clubfoots. Thinking *Now now now now now* and inverting all cock-eyed, crook-backed, tortuous bandy deformity out of the bottle, calling forth fiends, calling forth bogies, rabid, raw-head bloody-bones. *Now*, she thinks, *now!* And positions herself to take Bale's semen, to mix it with her own ruined and injured eggs and juices to make a troll, a goblin, broken imps and lurching oafs, felons of a nightmare blood, fallen pediatric angels, lemures, gorgons, cyclopes, Calibans, God's ugly, punished customers, his obscene and frail and lubberly, his gargoyle, flyblown hideousities and blemished, poky mutants, all his throwbacks, all his scurf, his doomed, disfig-

ured invalids, his human slums and eldritch seconds, the poor relation and the second-best, watered, bungled being, flied ointment, weak link, chipped rift, crack and fault and snag and flaw, his maimed, his handicapped, his disabled, his crippled, his afflicted, delicate cachexies with their provisional, fragile, makeshift tolerances. Invoking the sapped, the unsound, the impaired, the unfit. Invoking the milksop, the doormat, the played-out and burnt-out, the used-up, the null and the void. Adjourning their spirits in the names of Mudd-Gaddis, of Tony Word and Lydia Conscience, of Janet Order and Benny Maxine, of Noah Cloth, spending his money like a drunken sailor, and Rena Morgan, spent. On behalf of dead Liam and her own unnamed stillborn kids. Thinking, Not gone a week and we've lost one. Thinking, Now, now, goddamn it, *now!* And accepting infection from him, contagion, the septic climate of their noxious genes. Dreaming of complications down the road, of bad bouts and thick medical histories, of wasting neurological diseases, of blood and pulmonary scourges, of blows to the glands and organs, of pathogens climbing the digestive tract, invading the heart and bone marrow, erupting the skin and clouding the cough.

Now, now, now, now, now, now, she thinks, and calls upon the famous misfits, upon centaurs and satyrs and chimeras, upon dragons and griffins and hydras and wyverns. Upon the basilisk, the salamander, and the infrequent unicorn.

And upon, at last, a lame and tainted Mickey Mouse.

More of the Bread Loaf Miscellany: There's been a request for any writing exercises which the Bread Loaf community can offer to help newer writers. If you'd like to help coordinate the creation of a "Bread Loaf Writing Exercises Anthology" this week, please present yourself to the conference office. If you have a writing exercise that's worked for you, write it up and bring it to the office. * **Pat Schmitter**, a nationally-certified massage therapist, will be available today and tomorrow for half-hour (\$30) and hour (\$45) sessions. Sign-up sheets are posted outside the door of Cornwall Clinic. * **Lois Rosenthal** brought recent copies of *Story* magazine with her, which are available in the library.

THE CRUMB

Volume 72 • Issue Number 7

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Tuesday, August 19, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Egg & Cheese Croissants, Hard Boiled Eggs, Home Fries, Pastry*
- 9:00 Lecture: **Edward Hirsch**, "Final Soliloquies," *Theatre*
Renga Hike with **John Elder**, *Front Porch*
BreadNet Introductory Class, *Apple Cellar*
- 10:10 Fiction Workshops, *Various Locations*
Guest Presentation: **Amy Holman**, *Theatre*
- 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Theatre*
- 1:00 Lunch: *Tuna Bagel Melts, Veggie Bagel Melts*
- 2:30 Classes on Craft, *Various Locations*
- 4:15 Afternoon Readings: **Julia Alvarez**,
Jonathan S. Addleton, *Theatre*
- 5:30 Reception, *Larch Well*
- 6:30 Dinner: *Grilled Flank Steak, Spinach and Filo Pie, White Bean Ragout, Eclairs*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **Elizabeth Spires**,
Katherine L. Hester, *Theatre*
- 9:30 The Bread Loaf Late Show: Open
Mike Readings, *Theatre*

Today's Schedule as a Villanelle

We feed ourselves and sit upon the chairs.
We listen when we can, sometimes alone,
attentive, on the edge of our despairs.

We wonder if the workshop really cares;
we cannot get our loved ones on the phone.
We feed ourselves and sit upon the chairs.

Another poet challenged from the stairs
as happened Saturday? We'll angle bones
attentive. On the edge of our despair,

we'll hear the singers' music on the air
and find a resurrection in their tones.
We'll feed ourselves and sit upon the chairs.

The classes meet, the muggy readings share
exhaustion and enlightenment. Unknown,
attentive, on the edge of our despairs,

we mingle at receptions, fame in a pair
of faded jeans beside us, human, on loan
to feed themselves and sit upon the chairs,
attentive at the edge of their despairs.



Seven Classes on Craft Offered Today at 2:30

Poetry Classes:



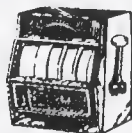
MICHAEL COLLIER
Exterior and Interior Objects
Barn 1

TOM SLEIGH
Revision, Part 2
Barn 2

Fiction Classes:



EMILY HAMMOND
*How Not to Write Dialogue for TV:
Dialogue in Fiction*
Barn 5



MIKE MAGNUSON
A Machine to Build Characters
Barn 6

Non-Fiction Class:



GARRETT HONGO
*The Quest: Selling, Writing,
Journal-Fragments Into
Memoir*
Barn West



TOM MALLON
Using History in Fiction
Barn 4



JOANNA SCOTT
The Exclamation Mark
Barn 3



Cocktail Reception Scheduled Today: Can they tell we need it?

This afternoon at 5:30, there will be cocktails at the **Larch Well**, between Larch dorm and the Inn. There's a rumor that the **Bread Loaf Singers** will be performing there at 6. We *can* confirm the rumor that this *will* be a book-signing opportunity, so come prepared.

Named for the size of the mosquitoes there

Tomorrow, there will be two outings to nearby **Texas Falls**, for those who are interested. The van for the lunch trip will leave from the front porch at 11:45 and return by 1:45. The van for the dinner trip will leave the porch at 5:45 and return by 7:45. The conference will provide a bag lunch/dinner, which means you must **sign up before dinner tonight**, if you'd like to attend. There will be no guided hikes at the falls, though you are welcome to explore the trails on your own. There are fantastic swimming holes there. As outing coordinator **Edward Brown** explains it, "basically, this is a chance to see a nice place and relax." If you have any questions about it, check by the front desk.

The Bread Loaf Miscellany

BreadNet II: There will be a second opportunity this morning to learn more about BreadNet at 9 in the Apple Cellar, led by **Caroline Eisner**. No sign-up sheets necessary. **New books by Bread Loafers:** Promotional flyers for new books by Bread Loaf alums which are received by *The Crumb* are posted on the bulletin board. * **Faux Crumbs:** *The Crumb* welcomes all parodies by contributors and former editors as long as they're as funny as yesterday's *The Crud*.

Today's Voices

Julia Alvarez

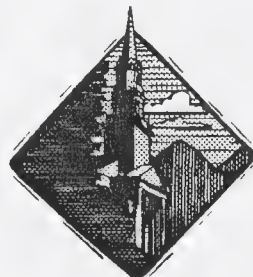
The mother used to go to all the poetry readings her daughter gave in town and sit in the front row applauding each poem and giving standing ovations. Yolanda was so embarrassed that she tried to keep her readings a secret from her mother, but somehow the mother always found out about them and appeared, first row, center. Even when she behaved herself, the mother threw her daughter off just by her presence. Yolanda often read poems addressed to lovers, sonnets set in bedrooms, and she knew her mother did not believe in sex for girls. But the mother seemed not to notice the subject of the poems, or if she did, to ascribe the love scenes to her Yoyo's great imagination.

From How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents

Jonathan S. Addleton

God talk came easily to us, from an early age. We breathed the Bible. Jesus Christ was a living presence, not some shadowy figure who walked the earth centuries ago. Spiritual interpretations applied to every aspect of our lives. No matter was so trivial that God would not be interested, no event so small that His hand was not somehow upon it. His power held the universe together, His love extended to the smallest of His creatures, His grace was sufficient for seeing us safely through our own brief sojourn upon this earth. In the end, our religion became as all-embracing as Islam. "Not a religion at all," as Pakistani Muslims so frequently told us, supremely confident in their own faith. "A way of life."

From Some Far and Distant Place



Elizabeth Spires

Sun in an Empty Room

after the Edward Hopper painting

Gone the longing which held him back from sleep,
a wound of emptiness which would not heal itself,
til dawn made ragged curtains of the night's
black cloth, light entering the room
as the white smell of salt did when the tides
turned toward land, touching him as music,
or a woman's hand, could not, and he slept,
sun striking the west wall again and again,
another canvas ready to be painted.

Katherine L. Hester

She had married Van the same way she did anything: an idea got lodged in her head and she ran with it. The things she decided about Van might not have had that much to do with him at all, but afterward it was difficult for her to remember what she had made up about him in the first ten minutes after she met him and what had actually been a part of his personality to begin with.

From "The Hat"

CARTOON BY NORTON GIRAULT



GIRAULT

Quote of the Day

Steve Duffy maintains his lead with a correct guess yesterday of the late novelist **Stanley Elkin**, whose pyrotechnics was much in evidence. Blue Argo got it right, too, exclusively into second place. Other son Davies and John Gardner. So, have that sorted out, let's head in a



signature linguistic in the excerpt of which puts her guesses: Robert—now that we different direction own initials and compass. If that's

tion. That should be easier when you consider that both the author's the initials of the title of the author's last novel can be found on a enough to give you your bearings, then scribble down your guess...but not before you enjoy this excerpt from that same novel:

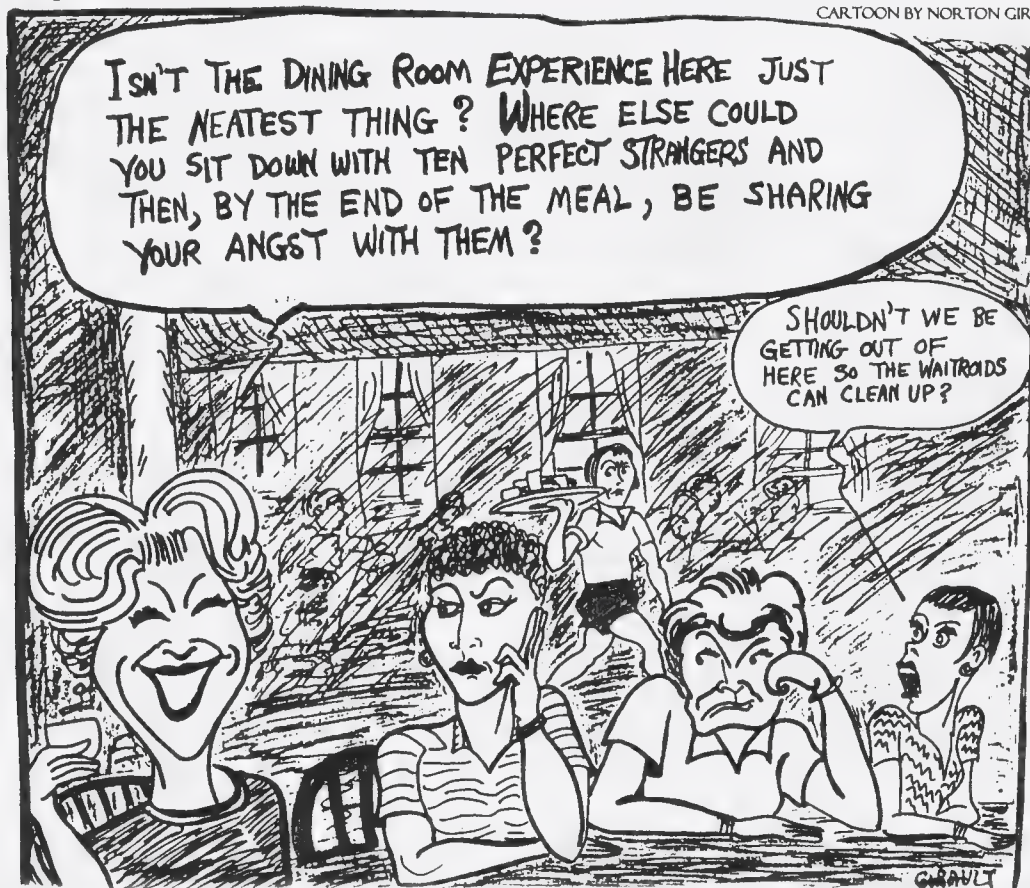
She was standing behind Harvey in line at the post office on Saturday morning when he turned and asked her to marry him. He asked the question so casually that she thought he was asking her if she could change a ten, and she said, "I don't know."

"I hope you'll give it your serious consideration," he said.

She replayed his voice in her mind and thought, It sounded as if he asked me to—Oh, God, I run into him at the post office and he asks me to marry him.

"Next," called the clerk, and while Harvey was paying for a dozen business-size envelopes, Ellen fled.

CARTOON BY NORTON GRAULT





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("THE CRUMB")

Volume 72 • Issue Number 8

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Wednesday, August 20, 1997

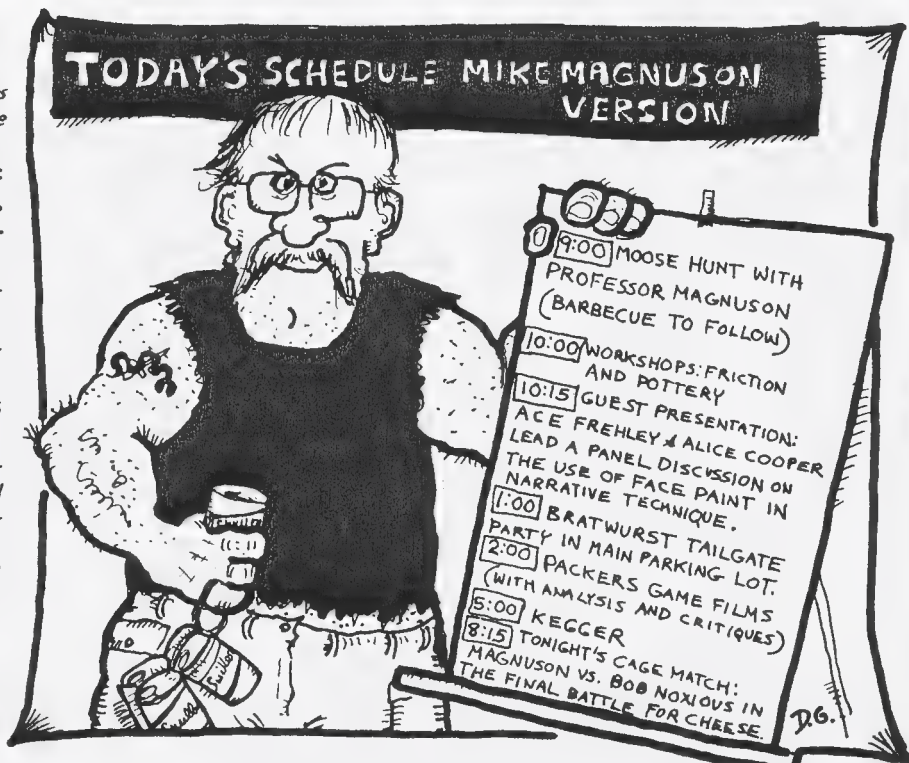
Editor: Al Hudgins

Today's Masthead by Jonathan Addleton

CARTOON BY DAVID GESSNER

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Pancakes with Vermont maple syrup, oatmeal*
- 9:00 Morning Readings: **Michael Collier, Grace Dane Mazur, Theatre**
- 10:10 Poetry and Non-Fiction Workshops
- 11:45 Van leaves for Texas Falls
- 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Theatre*
- 1:00 Lunch: *Chicken Caesar Salad, Traditional Caesar Salad, Bean Salad, Rice Krispie Treats*
- 2:30 Lecture: **Robert Boswell**, "Narrative Spandrels," *Theatre*
- 4:15 Afternoon Readings Pt. I: **Antonya Nelson, Laure-Anne Bosselaar, Theatre**
- 5:30 Afternoon Readings, Part II: **Administrative Staff:** *Al Hudgins, Chin Chong, Kristin Henderson, Mike Theune, Ting Ting Cheng, Tom Paine, Jodee Stanley, Theatre*
- 5:30 Special Presentation: Warren Wilson MFA program, *Blue Parlor*
- 5:45 Van leaves for Texas Falls
- 6:30 Dinner: *BBQ Chicken, Stuffed Poblano Chilies*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **Gloria Naylor, Rachel Wetzsteon, Theatre**
- 9:30 Coffee Reception, *Barn*
- 10:15 The Bread Loaf Late Show: **More Administrative Staff:** *Gregg Cowles, Blue Argo, Van Jordan, Laura Wexler, Jamie Grechika, Steve Duffy, Patrick Phillips, Joanna Hershon, Hugh Coyle, Heidi Julavits, Michelle Demers, John Mancuso, Karen Powell, Theatre*



Today's Voices

Michael Collier

Naushon Island

The deer came out of the lane last night,
two bucks first and two does next –
the four at intervals. And each stopped
where the one before stopped and turned
and looked as the others looked
and then went on into the swale.

From the porch I called the dogs off
the granite rocks in the yard
where they barked at the cautious deer.
But the dogs would not come back, so I crossed
the lawn and stood with them among the rocks,
and just my hand calmed them enough

so we could watch as the deer disappeared
through the rush and grass of the swale.
I stared into the swale until the stars
above turned white, and though
I could no longer see the deer, I knew
they must lie with their legs folded,

the weight of their bodies crushing
the grass, and it was enough to calm
that portion of myself that had stopped
and turned away from the rocks
but was afraid to come in and lie down
beneath the heavy, folding rest of sleep.

Grace Dane Mazur

How does it feel, silk on the skin? It feels like a
cat's fur without the fur, or velvet without the nap. It
feels like air on a warm night, when you can't tell
where you leave off and your surroundings begin.

It has to do with the fineness of the thread. The
exact diameter of the silk strands – there are two of
them as they come out of the spinneret on the head of
the caterpillar – is not important here. We're not used
to feeling thicknesses that small, or visualizing
thinnesses that great.

Think of it this way: imagine your hand on the
mane of a horse. The flanks of a cow. Now caress
something finer: a cat, a long-haired one if possible,
an angora. As much finer still is the silk thread used
in weaving. Touching one such strand gives no

pleasure. Just as playing with one cat hair is of no
interest. You need the whole pelt.

The reason can be found in your fingertips.
Look at them. Look at the thinness of the grooves
that make up the fingerprint – what if the sensory
nerve endings in the fingers are spaced as closely as
those grooves? Then anything that thin will be
maximally felt. Things much thinner, you won't feel
at all. Blow on your fingertips, with your lips pursed
as if for whistling. Silk can feel like that.

From "Silk"

Antonya Nelson

Everyone needs a friend like Roxanne Titan,
someone who serves, by being constant, as a reminder
of how much you have changed. There is Roxanne,
twenty-eight years old, the same long, layered-look
frosted blond hair pulling in a swirl away from her
face as if she'd styled it in a headwind of hairspray.
Around her eyes is the teal blue color we favored.
Her clothes are more expensive replicas of what she
wore in high school ten years ago, muted sweaters,
tapering blue jeans, heels. She wants to be young, off
balance, teetering purposefully next to her husband,
drinking something serious like bourbon. Though I
knew its contents, I opened the envelope anyway. I
hand the photo to my two-year-old daughter, who
delights in pictures. She names all women Mommy
and says it now of my old best friend.

Last week in an elevator someone said
"Roxanne" and I found myself turning relexively, on
the verge of responding, as if I'd heard my own name.

From "Goodbye, Midwest"

Laure-Anne Bosselaar

Fallen

A friend had a Minnesota catalogue company
send me plant-them-yourself dahlias by mail.
The tubers nested in a rumpled mess of shredded paper.
One strip, caught deep in a root's cleavage
resisted, wouldn't come out. I pulled carefully
at the white paper, reading its truncated sentence:
...enclosed manuscript for your Poetry Prize. I hope...

I remembered those publishers' guidelines:
*we will recycle those manuscript not selected
in a manner that will maintain the writers' privacy.*

Shredded, they sent the mess to nurseries, to protect other bundles from being mishandled, torn. It took me three hours to separate the fragments of that specific font and paper from the other strips. I saved seven lines.

So this poem is for you – the one who wrote:
*blossom twigs in a glass jar by the bed and God of the hinge,
 potential or fallen: it's that time of doubt again.*
 I want you to know I love that line, its surrendering tone,
 its rhythm – and pinned it to my wall. In Autumn,
 when my first red dahlia blooms, I'll put it
 in a glass jar, and place it under the word *fallen*.

Gloria Naylor

Some things stay the same. August is August. The hot wind blowing through the palmettos coulda been coming in 1899 when she remembers her first taste of the sweet juices from an icy slice of honeydew. The quivering green slivers melt in a mouth that's a hundred years older, while the pleasure is fresh and new. The last time you're doing something – knowing you're doing it for the last – makes it even more alive than the first. It's her last slice of honeydew on any August twenty-first in that silver trailer, so she enjoys it slow. She lets the juices linger in the corner of her mouth before taking the paper napkin to wipe 'em away – her last time for doing that. It's with a deep satisfaction that she finally gets down to the rind. She don't scrape till the flesh becomes bitter, leaves a little of the sweetness. She's had more than her share of enough.

From *Mama Day*

Rachel Wetzsteon

To a Passerby

(after Baudelaire)

Evening spread its shadow on the rooftops;
 couples, all smiles, stood smitten on each corner,
 feasting on their own eyes. And then it happened:
 out of the teeming night there came a mourner –
 for a dead friend or his own life, I dared not
 guess, but he looked so stricken that I turned
 from own friend's vise-like embrace and stared, not
 out of abhorrence, but in fascination,
 and then he met my gaze, serenely, proudly!
 We should have fled at once, and we both knew it,
 but we both lacked the stamina to do it;
 tugged by two loves, society and sorrow,
 we drifted off to different romances,
 leaving behind a monument of glances.

Also reading today:

Your hard-working **Administrative Staff** takes to the podium today at 5:30 and 10:15. Your humble editor, whose work you may already be more than tired of, will nevertheless be one of those reading this afternoon. Fresher voices include: Chin Chong, Kristin Henderson, Mike Theune, Ting Ting Cheng, Tom Paine, and Jodee Stanley. Tonight's Staff readers: Gregg Cowles, Blue Argo, Van Jordan, Laura Wexler, Jamie Grechika, Steve Duffy, Patrick Phillips, Joanna Hershon, Hugh Coyle, Heidi Julavits, Michelle Demers, John Mancuso, and Karen Powell.

Departure Schedule

Today, the shared taxi departure schedule will be posted near the check this no later and confirm your Front Desk. Don't your non-refund- you do so.



Front Desk. Please than this evening reservation at the forget to bring able deposit when

Sign-ups for Open Mike

The final two Open Mike readings are scheduled for tomorrow afternoon at 5:30 and tomorrow evening at 10:15. Sign-up sheets for these went up yesterday. Please don't sign up again if you've already had a chance at one of the previous Open Mike events.



The Bread Loaf Miscellany

Warren Wilson was not a president: It's a low-residency MFA program and you can learn more about it by attending a special presentation today at 5:30 in the Blue Parlor. *** Not a description of the rooms at Gilmore:** Bread Loaf mouse pads will be on sale at the bookstore this afternoon. *** Texas Falls or bust:** If you signed on for one of the Texas Falls outings, don't forget to show up at the appointed hour, 11:45 for lunch and 5:45 for dinner. *** An albatross around his neck:** S.T. Coleridge's quote for Ellen Voigt's lecture tomorrow didn't fit in this morning's *Crumb* because of space. It's posted on the bulletin board.

Quote of the Day

If you'll take out your compasses now, class, your editor will orient you as to the identity of yesterday's mystery author: her last novel, *Sister Water*, is represented by "SW" and her own initials by "NW." Can you say "**Nancy Willard**,"



GOOD. Not only can *you* say it, even wrote it down and handed it Argo. This puts her in a tie with

class? Good. but one of you in yesterday: Blue Steve Duffy for James Fox is in Chauna Craig. A-fiction faculty was decades. But now

the lead (six points apiece) as our contest enters the home stretch. third place with four points, and three of you have three points: nita Mathias, and Jodee Stanley. Nancy Willard's first year on the 1975, and she taught here nearly every year over the next two we shift regions again since there's a taste of Mexico in today's mystery author, who offers us a poem set on the Cumberland Plateau at Sewanee, Tennessee. The writers' conference held there at the University of the South coincides with a summer music festival for youth, and like today's writer, I, too, was struck by this interesting juxtaposition of literature and music when I was there. We take that connection even further here at Bread Loaf, as tomorrow night we will have a concert by the Vermont Symphony Trio and soon thereafter our very own Bread Loaf Singers will again perform. But for now, let's enjoy this poetic concert:

In a Different Country

Music Festival, Sewanee, Tennessee

In come the harps, four grounded wings
as of some Cretaceous dragonfly
dismembered and shellacked:
two black, one cedar-red, one golden brown
conveyed on baggage dollies,
torn angels positioned one by one
al fresco in the sun

Parents, nostalgists, drop-ins hush.
The harps sing, it is virginal.
Karl Philip two hundred years gone
and Miss Alexander misplaced by fifty years
outside whose window even then
as now a cardinal from the pin
oak calls *fierce fierce!*

to be plucked by four dewy girls
ordered the way Matisse
might have arrayed them: a blonde
at the black, a black at the cedar-red
an Asian at the golden brown and
a pale brunette at the other black.
While we sit pampered in the shade

out pours the piece I came to grief on:
Karl Phillip Emanuel's "Solfeggietto."
Miss Alexander's spatulate digits
stretched my stubby fingers to enforce
leaps I couldn't make, little runs
through lesser unplayable Bach
that defeated me the year I was ten.

The Bread Loaf Classifieds

RIDE WANTED: TO BOSTON ON SUNDAY. NEED TO REACH BOSTON AREA BY 3 PM TO CATCH EARLY EVENING FLIGHT TO GLASGOW. WILL PAY GAS, OTHER EXPENSES. PLEASE SEE JONATHAN ADDLETON. MANY THANKS.

NECKLACE LOST: ONE OF OUR FELLOWS LOST A GOLD CHAIN NECKLANCE. IF YOU FIND IT, PLEASE TURN IT IN AT THE FRONT DESK.

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT: TOMORROW MORNING, ELLEN VOIGT'S LECTURE ON LYRIC STRUCTURE WILL FOCUS ON A HANDFUL OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS AND THEIR EVOLUTION. THE PRESENTATION WILL LAST AN HOUR, SO SHE AIMS TO START PROMPTLY AT 9. DISCUSSIONS, QUESTIONS, REBUTTALS, ETC. WILL FOLLOW AT 10, FOR ANYONE WITH THE NECESSARY STAMINA.

The Bread Loaf Writers' Conference

The Crumb



Volume 72, No. 8 / Wednesday, August 20, 1997 / Editor: Al Hudgins

Webmiller: David Bain

--Bulletin--

He's All Right, But

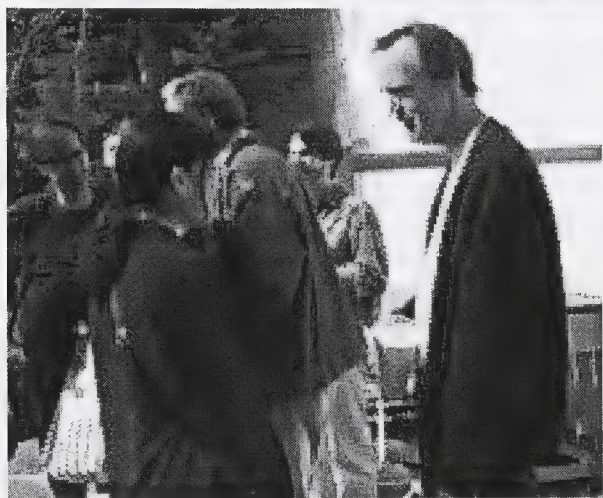
Crumb Editor Wounded in Self-Attack

RIPTON, VT (BP) Early Wednesday morning, as blissfully unaware Conferees addressed their pancakes, Canadian bacon, and scrambled eggs in the dining room, Crumb Editor Al Hudgins suffered a slight wound to the upper thigh while in a xeroxing frenzy in the Conference office. It is theorized that in his hurry to get today's Crumb out before diners finished their coffee, he somehow stabbed himself in the leg with scissors, inflicting a half-inch deep wound. Although the Conference nurse was not yet on duty, staff administered to the stricken but deeply embarrassed editor until medical help could be obtained. After the wound was staunched and tetanus and other shots were applied (Hudgins asked that he also receive a rabies shot due to suspicious red squirrels in the woods surrounding his cabin), the courageous journalist went back to his main task: getting Bread Loaf readers their issues. "We are going to nominate him for a Bread Loaf Purple Heart," promised Carol Knauss, Conference secretary. Stopped on his way to the Little Theatre to deliver a poetry reading, Conference Director Michael Collier was unsparing in his praise for the bravery of the dogged Crumb editor. "He is one tough cookie," Collier said. Hudgins is resting comfortably in his cabin, but is expected to be at his post as Madrigals Conductor at 12:15 pm today.

Your regular edition of the Crumb has been preempted by the accident. As soon as we can pry a floppy disk from the editor, we will put it up on the web. Until then, here are some pictures taken yesterday.



Impromptu workshop, 8/19/97



Tom Sleight greets conferee after reading.



Left: Ed Hirsch, Ellen Bryant Voight; Right: Sandy Solomon



Above: Advancing toward the picnic on the West Lawn, 8/19/97



Left: Lynne Lewis describes her novel structure to friends, West Lawn picnic, 8/19/97

[\[Return to Bread Loaf Writers' Conference HomePage\]](#) [\[Go to Next Day's Crumb\]](#)

Caren Lissner wins the "Caption the Norton" Contest



Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Eggs, Grits, French Toast*
 9:00 Lecture: **Ellen Bryant Voigt**: "Lyric Structure," *Theatre*
 10:10 Fiction Workshops, *Various Locations*
 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Theatre*
 1:00 Lunch: *Roast Beef, Bacon, and Cheddar Sandwich, Grilled Vegetable and Pasta Salad*
 2:30 Q&A Session on Poetry Publication: **Mary Jo Bang, Michael Collier, David Daniel, and Martha Rhodes**, *Theatre*
 4:15 Afternoon Readings: **Joanna Scott, Jason Sommer**
 5:30 Open Mike Readings: *Shelagh Shapiro, Jan Shapin, Sally Naylor, Laine Frizzo, George LeMaitre, Noah Bruce, Tim Smith, Helen Campbell, Tracy Winn, Mil Norman-Risch, C.S. Davis, Sharon Brooks, Peter Pagano.*
 6:30 Dinner: *Soy Marinated Salmon, Crispy Tofu Stir Fry*
 8:15 Musicale: **Vermont Symphony Trio**
 9:30 Coffee Reception, *Barn*
 10:15 The Bread Loaf Late Show: Open Mike Readings: *Bob Haynes, Roy Jacobstein, Eleanor Lodge, David Norian, Ann Mitsakos, Caren Lissner, David Steinhardt, Susan Gray, Aviva Vogel, Lisa Bourbeau.*

This Just In from Samuel Taylor Coleridge:

In Shakespeare's poems the creative power and the intellectual energy wrestle as in a war embrace. Each in its excess of strength seems to threaten the extinction of the other...What then shall we say? even this: that Shakespeare, no mere child of nature; no automaton of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings, and at length gave birth to that stupendous power....

— *Biographia Literaria*

[Editor's Note: This is *not* the Quote of the Day.]

This just in from Tom Paine's Guy from Albany:

Wow, like that Mariner Dude was way cool the way he hung out with that awesome bird, you know? And man, that Kublai Khan sure knew how to party on. But the head trip that guy's got going for that Shakespeare dude: whoa. I mean, face it, man, that dark lady's a babe.



Today's Schedule for Those Tired of Chilly Vermont Weather

- 7:30 Steaming hot grits that'll stick to yer ribs
 9:00 The Georgia Firecracker Tackles Some Hot Sonnets
 10:10 Your novel manuscript gets a warm, cozy reception.
 12:15 Singers serenade with "My Heart Doth Beg You'll Not Be Cold" and "Matona, Lovely Muffler"
 1:00 Piping-Hot Roast Beef and Veggies Sizzling on the Grill
 2:30 Poets in Cardigans Exchange Hot Tips
 4:15 Sommertime.....and the livin' is easy...
 5:30 New Voices Under Hot Lights
 6:30 Tofu Fried up Crispy and Hot, I mean, really hot, hotter than oh, say, a *volcano* kind of hot. A kind of culinary homage, wouldn't you say? *Aloha!*
 8:15 Hot Licks without Drumsticks
 9:30 Coffee Hotter than a McDonald's lawsuit.
 10:15 More New Voices Under Even Hotter Lights.

The Bread Loaf Classifieds

LOST SWEATER – REWARD! DESPERATE! BROWN CARDIGAN SWEATER WITH AUTUMN LEAF MOTIF IS MISSING. ISABELLA MCFARLIN, ITS OWNER, WILL PAY \$10 FOR ITS RETURN. PLEASE LEAVE IT AT THE FRONT DESK WITH YOUR NAME.

ANONYMOUS NOTE TO SMOKERS: "A CIGARETTE BUTT IS LITTER AND SHOULD BE TREATED ACCORDINGLY, NOT THROWN ON THE GRASS. THANKS."

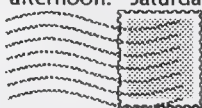
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Bakeless Readings September 19

To celebrate the publication of the first annual Katharine Bakeless Nason Literary Prize-winning manuscripts, the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Middlebury College, and the University Press of New England cordially invite you to attend a reading on Friday, September 19, 1997 at 7 p.m. at Chapters, 1512 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. **Mary Jo Bang**, *Apology for Want*, poetry, chosen by Edward Hirsch and **Katherine L. Hester**, *Eggs for Young America*, fiction, chosen by Francine Prose. A reception and book signing follows the reading. RSVP 202/347-5495.

The Bread Loaf Miscellany

The Mailing Lists are ready: Stop by the Conference Office to pick up your copy of the Conference-wide mailing list, so you can stay in touch come Sunday. Keep in mind that Friday at noon is the deadline for making any changes thereto. If we failed to type your E-mail address correctly, yours may have been one of the cases of fairly illegible handwriting the Office Staff encountered. Be understanding. ☐ **Shipping books home:** If you've bought a pile of books here, you can lighten your load on your return trip by shipping the books home via USPS and FedEx. Mailing tape and boxes are available at the bookstore; the Front Desk has the FedEx mailers. Please note that if you wish to send anything FedEx, you must notify them by telephone by 1 pm for a 2 pm pickup. Friday, August 22 is the last day FedEx will pick up at Bread Loaf. Noon Saturday, August 23 is the deadline for U.S. mail and parcel post. The packages will go out Saturday afternoon. Saturday is the last day of the season for mail pickup. ☐ **Elec-**



tronic Crumb: Our thanks to **David Bain** for getting our daily musings out on the Bread Loaf website each day, and for his bulletin yesterday morning: *Crumb Editor Wounded in Self-Attack*. You will be relieved to know that your humble editor has been issued a pair of rounded scissors to keep him out of harm's way. ✂ **Apple Cellar Availability:** The Apple Cellar will open today from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and also from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, it will be open from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., when it will close for good. ☐ **Those with Martha Rhodes appointments** on Saturday, August 23 are asked to drop off her/his manuscript or portions of work at the Conference Office, so she may review it prior to your meeting. ☞ **Departure Board:** Don't forget to make your arrangements with the Front Desk concerning Sunday departures. ➔

Today's Voices

Joanna Scott

Perhaps I should mention my family's history. There was my father's aunt Martha, who used to chew her lips to bloody shreds; my father's father, who spent the last ten years of his life singing lullabies to his hogs; and my father, of course. He swore to the end that his trouble was just a bum knee and a few quirky nerves. He wore my mother out – she wasn't even forty when we buried her. My brother fled as soon as he was old enough to drive a car, and I haven't heard from him since. So Daddy and I were alone for his last decade. I did what I could for him, all the while dreaming, I confess, about the life I would begin after he was gone. And now I'm like a stone church, steeple intact, standing amid the rubble of a decimated village – my ruin could begin tomorrow.

From "Tumbling"

Jason Sommer

Not When You Call Them Do the Pictures Come

In all of his alarm at the late departure
he still had his American thought for the day –
that he might be the only one in Ireland
at that moment who was concerned with time.
He retains the look of what he was doing:
fumbling the keys to the floor, slapping a book
under his arm – considering the lighted radio,
whether it needed extinguishing.

Sometimes he left
it on for hours, a tree falling in the forest
and no one to hear. It might have been playing,
as it often did in his presence, great works
by the masters kept at bay in the background,
spending their largesse almost out of range,
but now it was saying a small country's news.
As he turned away to objects demanding sequence –
the bunched rug in the entry, the door, the lock –

the sounds at the verge of consciousness
became words as the ticking seems in motion toward us
in the dark bedroom, swelling into notice.
Perhaps it was just the syntax leaving till last
that the eight-year-old boy injured in the car
accident on the Naas Road, County Dublin,
in which his father had been killed, the child who was
expected to survive had died that day

which brought it in on him so, in past the simple
machine of his attention. So that he hardly
knew he had heard until he began to cry
for that son, and sat down to be late
for the class he was going to teach, feeling foolish
and yet instructed all over again, by force
as it seems he must be, in what he might have known.

Quote of the Day

Last year, one of our guest readers was the poet **Maxine Kumin**, whose poem from her served as yesterday's minute, Michael Tyrell [please put your guess-body else got it right, Argo remain tied for co" clue led some to



book *Connecting the Dots* Quote of the Day. At the last came up with the right answer es in before 2 pm], but no- and so Steve Duffy and Blue the lead. The "taste of Mexi-guess Alberto Rios and Carole but what I was going for was

Oles [Olé], and there was also a vote for Lynn Emanuel. the spice *cumin* which so defines a taco. So, two days left of Quote of the Day, this morning and tomorrow. Remember it has to be a writer who's read at Bread Loaf. Anxious to get started? What's your all-fired hurry? In for a penny, in for a pound, I suppose, at least initially. All right, I concede those are some pretty obscure clues there, but it's time to face the music: you're running out of time here. Today's author is no ordinary Joe, either, known to father and son, man, woman, and child.

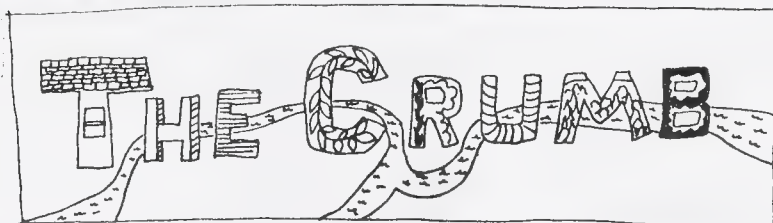
....we get a call one afternoon that a house is on fire near Taylor, a little community about ten miles south of town.It's early in my career and I don't know much, but I know when we roll up that there's no saving this house. The entire structure is blazing from top to bottom, and it has started falling in. We pull the hoses off anyway, and start pumping out of our 750-gallon booster tank. Hot isn't the word for it. This thing will burn your ass off even through your turnouts. We go up to it and start putting water on it, but this doesn't even faze the flames. Nearly instantly, we notice a pretty bad thing: the 250-gallon LP-gas tank that furnishes heat for the sitting less than twenty feet from be burned to death, blown to whoever's waiting for us. I get it, open the nozzle, and the ferocity when it hits it. But I'm the house at my back. I've hands are burning, my neck, my arms. Somebody shouts some- turned on me. I'm putting a stream on the tank and they're putting a stream on me. I stay where I am even though I don't want to. I'm cooling the tank if the fire from the house doesn't get me first. I'm drowning in the water and burning at the same time. I have to close my eyes and just endure it. It's bad, but this is my job, and I can't run from it, much as I'd like to. The only thing that consoles me is knowing that we'll eventually run out of water and be forced to retreat.



house has heated cherry red. It's the house, and if it blows we'll all Kingdom Come, to Jesus or There's only one thing to do: that job, and I kneel and turn to water sizzles with a terrible being burned by the heat from never been hotter in my life. My head, my back and legs and thing, and suddenly a hose is

I don't know how long it lasts. The red cherry glow on the tank starts to vanish. The house caves in with a great roar of flames. My partners put more water on that side of the house and finally they tell me I can move. I stand up and everybody looks at me and asks me if I'm all right. They can see what I can't. They lead me away from the tank and they tell me to get that stuff off. They start unbuckling my coat fast and they pull it off me. They hold it up in front of me so I can see what I'm wearing. The whole back of the coat is gone, nothing left but two hanging wings of charred black canvas with pockets. They tell me to take my helmet off and look at it. I do that and hold it in my hands. The top of it is bubbled up and blistered, melted.

They just grin and shake their heads. I'm not grinning a whole lot.



Volume 72 • Issue Number 10

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Friday, August 22, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Today's Masthead: Anonymous

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Vegetarian Omelets, Vermont Maypo*
- 9:00 Informal Talk/Q&A: **Ann Beattie, Theatre**
- 10:10 Poetry/Non-Fiction Workshops
- 10:10 Guest Presentation: **Phil Pochoda, "Fiction Markets," Theatre**
- 12:15 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Rehearsal Room*
- 1:00 Lunch: *Turkey Sandwiches, Grilled Portobello Mushrooms, Assorted Novelty Ice Creams*
- 2:30 Non-Fiction Q&A: **Tom Mallon, Alane Mason, Jordan Pavlin, Scott Sanders, Theatre**
- 2:30 Poetry and Fiction Classes, *Various Locations*
- 4:15 Afternoon Readings: **David Bradley, David Gessner, Theatre**
- 5:30 Gala Cocktail Reception, *Treman Lawn if it's not raining; Barn, if it is*
- 6:00 Faculty/Fellows/Scholars/Staff pictures, *Treman Lawn or Barn*
- 6:30 Dinner: *Maple Glazed Pork Chops, Mustard Grilled Seitan, Boston Cream Pie*
- 8:15 Evening Readings: **Edward Hirsch, Cathryn Alpert, Theatre**
- 9:30 Conference Slide Show by **Edward Brown, Theatre**
- 10:00 The Bread Loaf Late Show: **Wait Staff, Part 2: Daniel Blasi, Sheilah Coleman, Amanda Davis, Blas Falconer, Beth Gylys, Gary Hawkins, Roy Kamada, Sarah Kelly, Mia Leonin, Jean Prafke, Patricia Ward, and Ted Weesner.**

Today's Schedule for the Grumpy

- 7:30 I'll tell you where you can pour that maple syrup.
- 9:00 You mean I got up early this cold, damp morning and it's *not* going to be Warren Beatty? How about Clyde Beattie?
- 10:10 My workshop is so cocky they think they can find a rhyme for *orange*.
- 12:15 I don't think I can take much more of that fa-la-la folderol.
- 1:00 Portobello mushrooms? Honey, I got more exotic mushrooms than that growing up the side of my bed.
- 2:30 The only non-fiction question I want answered is when do they think this damn rain is going to stop?
- 4:15 I'm very sorry, but they could call up the ghost of Robert Frost himself this afternoon and I'd still be up there in the back sawing some *Zzzzzs*.
- 5:30 But where will it be if it's *snowing*?
- 6:00 When are they taking *my* picture?
- 6:30 Is there *anything* Vermonters won't put maple syrup on?
- 8:15 I'm sorry, but those two reading tonight are simply too tall.
- 9:30 Oh, it's not enough that my hair has



frizzed up in all this damp-ness and will never be straight again. No, they've got to screen *pictures* of it.

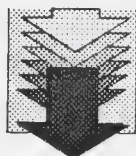
10:00 They can wait all night if they like, but I'm going to bed.

Five Classes on Craft Offered Today at 2:30

Fiction Classes:



CAROLYN FERRELL
Structure and Resonance
Barn 1



GRACE DANE MAZUR
Deep Revision
Barn 2



ANTONYA NELSON
Shape, Not Plot
Barn 3



JAY PARINI
Structure of the Story
Barn 4

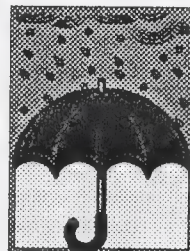
Poetry Class:



FORREST GANDER
The Green Nymph Stick Insect: Observations on Poetry, Science, and Creation
Theatre

The Bread Loaf Miscellany

We welcome **Ann Beattie**, who joins us for a special session this morning at nine. ☞ **Tips:** Please leave tips for housekeeping people separate from those for the wait staff and mention the building and room number. ☞ **Departures:** Please check the list of flight times and other departure information which is posted by the Front Desk. Let them know if that time is correct. ☞ **Sale!** The Bookstore is having a big sale today and tomorrow: **20% off everything in the store.** ☞ **Kit's address:** Literary agent **Christina Ward** wants us to publish her address and phone, if any Bread Loafer would like to contact her after the conference: *Post Office Box 515, North Scituate, MA 02060.* Phone is 617/545-1375. Fax is 617/545-7314. ☞ **Change in time for Saturday's non-fiction workshops:** Because of flight arrangements, the **Garrett Hongo Workshop** will be meeting in the morning tomorrow, instead of the afternoon, in the Blue Parlor. Likewise, the **Scott Sanders Workshop** will meet in the morning in the Library downstairs. ☞ **The Rain Location Finder:** If the weather today is as rainy as forecasts predict, please note that the Gala Reception will be held inside the Barn instead of the Treman Lawn. Similarly, **Alane Mason's** four-person group meetings will be held inside the Barn, **Jordan Pavlin's** individual meetings will be held in the Theatre, and **Amy Holman's** individual meetings will be held in the Main Library.



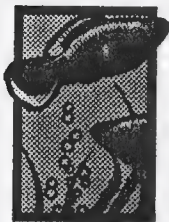
Today's Voices

David Bradley

Sometimes you can hear the wire, hear it reaching out across the miles; whining with its own weight, crying from the cold, panting at the distance, humming with the phantom sounds of someone else's conversation. You cannot always hear it – only sometimes; when the night is deep and the room is dark and the sound of the phone's ringing has come slicing through uneasy sleep; when you are lying there, shivering, with the cold plastic of the receiver pressed tight against your ear. Then, as the rasping of your breathing fades and the hammering of your heartbeat slows, you can hear the wire: whining, crying, panting, humming, moaning like a live thing.

From The Cheneyville Incident

David Gessner



Water is the central fact of the herring's existence. It surrounds them, courses over them, fights against them. It's the herring's medium. The natural analogy would be to say that people live in air, but today

I think of something else. Words. We are born into them and live in them. We writhe through them sinuously, moving upward as they rush over and purl around us. We can't get rid of them even when we want to. They fill us, bubbling up like springs in our minds. While most of us can't paint or play an instrument, we all have words. Perhaps van Gogh was most comfortable with paint, with color, but even he spilled out pages and pages of letters to his brother Theo almost every night. For most of us words are the medium. Our everyday art and common heritage.

From A Wild, Rank Place

Edward Hirsch

Uncertainty

We couldn't tell if it was a fire in the hills
Or the hills themselves on fire, smoky yet
Incandescent, too far away to comprehend.
And all this time we were traveling toward
Something vaguely burning in the distance –
A shadow on the horizon, a fault line –
A blue and cloudy peak which never seemed
To recede or get closer as we approached.
And that was all we knew about it
As we stood by the window in a waning light
Or touched and moved away from each other
And turned back to our books. But it remained
Even so, like the thought of a coal fading
On the upper left-hand side of our chests,
A destination that we bore within ourselves.
And there were those – were they the lucky ones? --
Who were unaware of rushing toward it.
And the blaze awaited them, too.

Cathryn Alpert

Marilee buttoned her jeans and took another look at the place where they had spent the night together. The spot was hauntingly beautiful, an appropriate setting, she thought, to have made love to a dwarf. Had Enoch known all along the caves would have this effect on her? Had he planned for it to happen this way? She eyed him as he pulled on his turtleneck. Sometimes she wondered if he understood her better than she understood herself.

"Want to do the rest of the tour?" Enoch asked, lacing up his walking shoes.

"No, I'm freezing," she said. "Let's just go."

"Reality ho!" said Enoch.

"Hmm," said Merilee.

From Rocket City

Quote of the Day

We come now to our final Quote of the Day for 1997, and a lively competition it has been. Blue Argo are still tied for the lead with 7 points higher than James Fox, who's make things more interesting this thought we'd have *two* quotes, and break the tie. But first, let me reveal



guessed that yesterday's mystery author was **Larry Brown**, the man-turned-fiction-writer/essayist: Blue and Steve, of course, as well Norton Girault, and Caroline Langston. There was also a vote for Richard Bausch's "The Fireman's Wife." The selection was from Larry's non-fiction book *On Fire*, which, he told me the last time he was here, outsold all his fiction titles put together. So there's a cheery thought for you non-fiction Bread Loafers out there. Larry's initials form the abbreviation for "pound," which explains one of yesterday's more obscure clues. The others had to with Larry's fiction titles, *Joe*, *Facing the Music*, and *Father and Son*. So, here we go, then, with today's *two* sets of clues. Whom should we do first, hmmm? Okay, the poet. Now, recognizing the identity of our Mystery Poet hinges on finding a sign in these clues. Or being around Bread Loaf the last couple of years. But figuring out the identity of our Mystery Novelist might initially require a stop at the U.S. Patent Office. The Mystery Novelist was on the faculty here about twenty years ago; the quote comes from a novel published ten years ago.

Curve

Freezeburn forms whirlpools and bearfur has curve.

My line is gravity's
sheer vertical.

Memory's the same
seme. Sail a memo
down: there's the spooled

real: plunge into simul-
cast. Caught up in the network is
a blue planet, spinner par
excellence.

It's too small.
Throw it back.



In the beginning the women are away
from the men and the men are away from the
women storms rock us and mix the men into
the women and the women into the men that
is when I begin to be on the back of the man
for a long time I see only his neck and his wide
shoulders above me I am small I love him
because he has a song when he turned around
to die I see the teeth he sang through the
singing was soft his singing is of a place where
a woman takes flowers away from their leaves
and puts them in a round basket before the
clouds she is crouching near us but I do
not see her until he locks his eyes and dies on
my face we are that way there is no breath
coming from his mouth and the place where
breath should be is sweet-smelling the others
do not know he is dead I know his song is
gone now I love his pretty little teeth instead.



The Crumb

Volume 72 • Issue Number 11

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Saturday, August 23, 1997

Editor: Al Hudgins

Today's Schedule

- 7:30 Breakfast: *Bacon & Eggs, Maltex*
9:00 Fiction and Non-Fiction Workshops
12:00 Bread Loaf Singers Rehearsal, *Theatre*
[Please note earlier start time]
1:00 Lunch: *Grilled Chicken, Garden Burgers, Fries*
2:00 Poetry Workshops
4:15 Afternoon Readings: **Jay Parini,**
Peter Landesman
6:30 Final Banquet: *Oven Roasted Mustard*
Rubbed Tenderloin with Wild Mushroom and
Tomato Salad or Paupiettes of Sole on a Bed of
Julienned Vegetables with Tarragon Eggplant
Roulade
8:15 Evening Readings: **Robert Boswell,**
Daniel Hall
9:30 Dance, *Barn*
Board Games, *Blue Parlor*

Today's Schedule for Disciples of Gordon Lish

- 7:30 Limp apron strings. Bacon eruptions. Dark acrid caffeine mirror.
9:00 Staple wounds. Manuscript stigmata. Bull & dozing.
12:00 The Greek chorus wailed its despair.
1:00 Yes, it is a no on this salad bar, yes – but there's no telling what the feeling here will be in answer to the next salad bar you show up in front of – and there is every reason for you to be persuaded to keep after roughage with whatever samples of your appetite you think might merit application. Our salad bar is wide open – to everyone and everything. It only remains for you to teach us who's who and what's what. Hope it helps for you to bear in mind a fact or three about the 'Bar – to wit, our daily greens are pretty terrific, making the competition for consumption ferociously tough; we turn around containers of fresh veggies with all possible speed, this as a courtesy to the hearts who wait for them; whatever comes to us is fed with like concern and managed with like dispatch. One thing more – no, two: small talk at the 'Bar is neither invited nor heard, and raspberry vinaigrette dressing is just, please, what the doctor ordered, okay?

- 2:30 Father knows best. Authority figures in decline. Do what I say or I will humiliate you. Repeat after me: *but Gordon says...*
4:15 No one saw me slip the magazine between the covers. Jay and Peter were doing their book reports. A saliva salvation as I stared at the flesh on the printed page. Something being said about a car and a crescent wrench.
6:30 In the summer in the late afternoon light, when the dining hall would be full, in clusters of forced conversation, four and five and six, discretely critiquing, avoiding eye contact with bad experiences from the night before, smirkingly skewering the roommate's failings, crumpled bowls of uneaten salad at their fingertips, trying to remember the wait person's name and genre, evaluating potentials for tonight's dance, it would not occur to them, not then, not ever, no they would remain blissfully unaware of the precise combination, the actual arcane numerology of the Ripton zip code.
8:15 Lumbar agony returns.
9:30 Here is what the dance is like. Well, there's the music. Loud, of course. Some of it sucks. Some of it sucks big time. Some of it is so perfect I want to weep. I want to weep anyway because I've never come up with the right opening line for that poet at the open mike with the poem about the lizard, the folded newspaper, and the purple hat. You know the poem with the woman in it who wore only a purple hat as a distaff version of a purple heart – the poem that worked a different meaning from the initials LBJ – the poet who might yield something so distinctively lyrical if only one could find the right opening line. Or the right moves on the dance floor. Or the right not to remain silent

A few word about tips

It is a long-standing Bread Loaf tradition to tip the Wait Staff for their many hours of hard work and refills of decaf. This is how we do it: you leave your tip with the Front Desk staff **today**, where it's gathered up and distributed equally to all the individuals who've served us so diligently by day and whose readings have entertained us so wildly at night. So, please try to make your arrangements in this regard before the day gets away from you. And Wait Staff, we thank you for all you've done. Ditto Social Staff and Office Staff and Librarians and Book Store Clerks and Nurses and Audio/Visual Technicians. Thank you, one and all.

Similarly, the local people who clean your rooms, make your beds, and provide fresh towels can be given tips by again leaving this at the Front Desk, along with your name and room number, because in this case the tips are not collected together and divided equally but are distributed directly to the person indicated. If you have questions about the proper amount, stop by the Conference Office and speak with Carol, or ask at the Front Desk.

There is no Lost and Found after Sunday

Because the Inn and surrounding buildings were fully staffed when you arrive and appear to be adequately staffed when you depart, many Bread Loafers have the idea that they may easily call up the Front Desk a day or two later and inquire after that navy blue cardigan they left draped on the back of the chair or that burgundy umbrella they left leaning against the fireplace. But the entire Bread Loaf campus is closed at the end of tomorrow, and there is no one left to answer the phone on Monday or walk upstairs to retrieve the notebook you left on the window ledge or the photo of your kids you forgot to take down off the wall. Trust us on this: *you don't want to leave anything behind*. Make sure you pack up *everything*, because it is very unlikely that you would ever see again any objects you leave behind.

The Bread Loaf Miscellany:

Miles to go before I sleep: Because **Garrett Hongo** and **Scott Sanders** must both leave this afternoon, their workshops will meet this morning, Garrett's in the Blue Parlor and Scott's in the Library downstairs. ✱ **Promises to keep:** Our librarian **Ting Ting Cheng** reminds us that all books we promised to return to the library must now be returned. Like today. Like *now*. So they can shelve them all and get out of there in time for the dance. ✱ **Lovely dark and deep:** Some music lyric sheets were lost in the Barn on Thursday night. They belong to **Honí Jeffers**, who really wants them back. If you know where they are, leave her a message or bring them to the Front Desk. ✱ **He gives his harness bells a shake:** Your humble editor, who has survived plunging scissors, sleep deprivation, and even the Garrett Hongo Memorial Tofu to bring you these little morning trifles, will be a new man today. No more *Crumbs*, except for tomorrow's goodbye edition, which is already printed. He thanks you most sincerely for your kind words about *The Crumb* and hopes you'll enjoy revisiting them on the Bread Loaf web page. ✱ **The only other sound:** The **Bread Loaf Singers** present their final performance tonight as the opening act in the Evening Readings. And Eddie Hirsch thought it was tough following a dwarf and a casaba melon. I'd like to acknowledge the singers, who've worked so hard and brought such lovely music to us all: first sopranos **Miho Nonaka** and **Ruth Sanders**, second sopranos **Robyn Art**, **Heather Candels**, **Bonnie Cunningham**, **Christina Davis**, **Jody Kaufman**, **Sally Naylor**, **Mil Norman-Risch**, **Emily Spiegelman**, and **Lina Maria Testa**, altos **Sarah Jacobus**, **Cynthia Kastner**, **Carol Knauss**, **Kate Schmitt**, **Dorothy Stephens**, and **Libby Stott**, tenors **Gillian Andrews**, **Kathleen Devereaux**, **Dick Hague**, **Betsy Lynch**, **Bob Minkoff**, and **Peter Pagano**, and basses **Jim Martin**, **Don Mitchell**, and **Don Slatoff**. I hope I got everyone: it was a large group and I'm afraid I've overlooked someone. Thanks, also, to others who tried us out for a while. I really enjoyed working with this group and they were a delight to direct. Thanks, too, singers, for the special lyrics and the very kind gift. You've touched my heart in a year when I really needed it, and it *doth* *beg* you'll not forget. ✱ **Whose Slides These Are:** Thanks to **Edward Brown** for last night's terrific slide show.

Today's Voices

Jay Parini

When I was thirteen, a junior high school teacher became very upset one day in class when I announced boldly that I had never read "made-up books" with any pleasure. Before school ended that day, she put into my hands a brief novel called *Of Mice and Men*. "It's by John Steinbeck," she said, "I think you'll like it." That night, reluctantly, I opened the book to read a page or two before turning off my bed lamp. Amazed, I found myself swept helplessly into the narrative current; I read all night, turning my light off sometime near dawn, exhausted but satisfied. The next day, after school, I made my way to the public library to see if there were any other books by this man called John Steinbeck. "My boy," said the elderly librarian, "you are in luck." She led me to his long shelf of books, where I have lingered happily for many decades.

From *John Steinbeck*

Peter Landesman

Then the boat jolted. "Hey now," Floyd said, "I said be seated now. We're still a good mile—"

The boat jolted again, then the sound of something cracking, like splintering wood. The wheel came up and stabbed Floyd in the gut. The water splashed, and Floyd looked up and saw only darkness at the bow, no flaming match, no burning cigarette. He could hear the people on the house scuffling and sliding. Then the stern rose behind him and the wheel stabbed him again and he felt a rib snap. The deck shuddered underfoot. Wood was splintering all around him, and now a loud pop and groan and Floyd knew the *Raven* was snapping its beams. He started counting to ten like he always did when there was something to face. But he couldn't really breathe. He started at one again, trying to breathe, but with each inhale a knife plunged into his chest. He'd cracked more than one rib. Maybe a whole side of them, he thought. At the end of ten seconds there was screaming and crying and water splashing all around him.

He found himself grinning and swallowing nervous laughter, thinking this couldn't be real, the plan couldn't actually have continued on without him, not after he'd stopped it. "Okay," he said calmly. He could see nothing. "Now what time is it?" he said, as though the right answer would mend the gash, fetch the people in the water and right the boat. But there was only the screaming and splashing. He reached to his right and grabbed a handful of shirt. "What

time is it?" he said, more calmly, almost menacingly. He reached in his pocket and lit a match: a trembling wrist: nine o'clock. "No!" he cried, and threw the wrist aside. "That's the wrong goddamn time. What time is it!" He reached to his left and grabbed hold of what was there and held it still with one hand while searching for wrists with the other. He lit a match: nine o'clock. "You girl!" he bellowed, "You said it was ten, you girl! It's the wrong time! It's the wrong goddamn time!"

From *The Raven*

Robert Boswell

Rita climbed the stairs to be certain, although she twice had to stop and rest on a step. She'd had a vision. A dream, really, but the dream had wakened her to a new understanding. Something very specific. In the dream, she had been on Mr. Gene's ranch, walking naked among the horses, whose loose mouths kissed her bare shoulders, whose long tongues caressed her neck. Mr. Gene stood on the other side of a corral, the wooden bars of the fence breaking up his body, his hand held high to block out the sun. She glanced at the sun as she worked her way toward him, and the intensity of the light played tricks on her eyes, turning everything black and white, as if she had entered an old movie. A breeze lifted the hat from Mr. Gene's head, and he stared at her bareheaded.

From *American Owned Love*

Daniel Hall

Winged Torso of Eros

You will never change, your life
suspended here, sealed off from the rush
of traffic and the weather, a twist of flesh
touched and wondered over by the likes
of me. Everything breakable in you
has been broken, but for those of us
who will not see, you take flight with a rustle
of ghost wings — your wings, too,

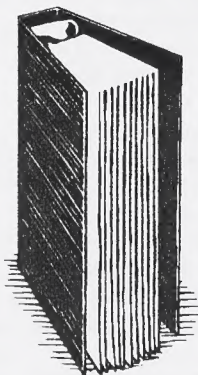
gone now, snapped off at the base,
even your sex — (a squeak of sole
on tile as Red Shirt leaves the hall)--
Oblivion beckons, you nod *Yes, yes...*
But he's coming back, we all do, to say *No*,
I will never let you go

Quote of the Day

BLUE ARGO AND STEVE DUFFY TIE; EACH GETS HALF A BOOK

Staffers **Blue Argo** and **Steve Duffy** collected two more points apiece for yesterday's *two* mystery authors and thus both finished off with a score of 9 points. We won't really make them share a book: they can

both select any book in the bookstore [aside from Bread Loaf] as a freebie. Congratulations to you sleuthing and/or reading. Have fun picking out **Chauna Craig** came in second with two correct with 5 points, and third place was a tie, at 4 points **Coyle**, who guessed yesterday's poet, and **James** points, was split between **Anita Mathias** and place, 2 points each, was shared by **Steve Burt** latter guessing yesterday's poet, too: **Heather** that "hmmmm" clue, as well as the reference to *Hinge & Sign*. Heather taught on the poetry previous two years. The Mystery Novelist was **Toni Morrison**, who served on the fiction faculty initials, TM, might be found beside logos in the U.S. Patent Office. The quote was from her novel *Beloved*, published in 1987. Thirteen other Bread Loafers also had correct guesses during the course of this year's competition. A complete list of results is posted on the conference bulletin board. My thanks to all of you who participated this year: I hope all of you *Crumb* readers, both here on the hill and out there in cyberspace who read the Bread Loaf web page, have enjoyed the selections and will investigate further the work of this year's Quote of the Day authors: *Tim O'Brien, Yusef Komunyakaa, Patricia Hampl, A.M. Homes, Richard Wilbur, Stanley Elkin, Nancy Willard, Maxine Kumin, Larry Brown, Heather McHugh, and Toni Morrison.*



the David Bain book on both on some very skillful your first prize book. guesses yesterday to finish up apiece, between **Hugh Fox**. Fourth place, at 3 **Jodee Stanley**, and fifth and **Jannett Highfill**, the **McHugh**, which explains her collected poems entitled faculty at Bread Loaf the Nobel Prize-winning author in 1976 and 1977. Her

The Bread Loaf Classifieds

FREE CONCERT: AT 5:30 TODAY IN THE LITTLE THEATRE, THE LOW FLYING PLANES WILL DO A POETRY / MUSIC COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE. GROOVY.

RIDE TO NYC/PHILLY: ANYONE NEEDING A RISE TO NYC OR PHILLY TOMORROW, PLEASE CONTACT STEPHEN RUBIN.

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CRUMB EDITOR SEEKS NY GIG: JUST MOVED BACK EAST AND LIVES 30 MINUTES BY TRAIN FROM NYC. LEAVE NOTE IN BOX OR WRITE 76 WASHINGTON AVENUE, BASKING RIDGE, NJ 07920.

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE • Wednesday, Aug

All the doors fly open

1997 may mark the seventy-second annual session of the conference. Welcome! Customs at first issue c will make may find th outside th daily s table scri before you last year. Loaf's we by evenin keep up. photos of photos of

— Linda Pastan

Inside this special expanded edition, we lis

THE CRUMB

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Today's Schedule for Those I of Introductory Small Talk

7:30 "Do you eat this well back ho
9:00 "I don't know about you, bu

THE CRUMB

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Volume 72 • Issue Number 4

Editor: Al Hudgins

TODAY:
LOPEZ
STORY
HONGO
UDALL
MOVIE
ANCE



Volume 72 • Issue Number 7

THE CRUMB

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Today's Schedule as a Villan
We feed ourselves and sit upon th
We listen when we can, sometin
attentive, on the edge of our d
if the worksho
or loved or

THE CRUMB

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Volume 72 • Issue Number 2

Editor: Al Hudgins

WORKSHOPS BEGIN TODAY; RUSSE
This afternoon at 2 o'clock, all of the workshops will begin. Wi living rooms, workshops meeting in the dining hall, workshops m hardly even knew existed, and if the fire marshal would let us, wi up on one of the fire escapes. For the rest of the conference, the days with the poetry and non-fiction workshops. But today, it's e why we have meetings scheduled in so many unusual places, as yo also need to come to the workshops. But today, it's e or she made such this luxury while y



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The Crumb

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Volume 72 • Issue Number 6



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Today's Schedule
7:30 Breakfast: Pancakes with Vermont maple syrup, oatmeal
9:00 Morning Reading: Michael Cotter, Grace Dane Ma-zur, Theatre
10:10 Poetry and Non-Fiction Workshops
11:45 Van leaves for Tex-E

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Tuesday, August 19, 1997

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5:30 Dinner
6:30 Evening
8:15 Jo Bang
9:30 Coffee R
10:15 The Brea
Readings

Crust Recall Sanders, "Voice

Saturday, August 16, 1997

Cartoon by Norton Circuit

Sunday, August 17, 1997

"THE CRUMB"
THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

August 18, 1997

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Editor: Al Hudgins
Issue Number 9

THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

"Starton" Contest

THE CRUMB

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THE BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Sunday, August 24, 1997

Today's Schedule.....

.....you have to write yourself. Both versions. The Inn is closing up for the season, and suitcases are everywhere. Car trunks slam shut, van doors close, engines idle in anticipation. A final wave, a final kiss. Two years ago, William Maxwell stood up at the podium in the Little Theatre and called us a company, in the theatrical sense, and in many ways this morning feels like the end of a play's successful run. The lights in the theatre are dark, the many costumes packed away. All the lines have been delivered. The cast we assembled here was unique and will never again appear together, and all of us in this company feel keenly this sense of loss.

But there is, too, all that has been gained. The fresh voices heard, the new ideas considered, the reactions to work, a song, a dance, an unforgettable remark. We carry away changes in our souls we might not be able to adequately explain, even if we try. There may be times when only the voice of another Bread Loafer will do. I hope you will extend this simple exchange that *The Crumb* has been, in its account of your variety and enterprise, extend it into letters and E-mail exchanges and phone calls. The voice of a Bread Loafer, whether on paper, a computer screen, or a telephone, can be a wonderful surprise and a great source of encouragement. I invite you to use the mailing list and yield to the impulse to make contact. We are no longer strangers, and the many worlds we inhabit as writers no longer have to feel quite so solitary. I wish you a safe journey as you leave this place, and I offer you, too, my sincere appreciation for the attention you've paid to these hasty scribbles.

Al Hudgins

DAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

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August 17, 1997

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BREAD LOAF WRITERS' CONFERENCE

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